University of Alberta

Teachers' Descriptions of Primary Children's Reading

by

Edith Margaret Furey ©

A thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Elementary Education

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall, 1998

National Library of Canada

Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Acquisitions et services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-34766-4

Canada

University of Alberta

Library Release Form

Name of Author: Edith Margaret Furey

Title of Thesis: Teachers' Descriptions of Primary Children's Reading

Degree: Ph.D.

Year this Degree Granted: 1998

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly, or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission.

Edith Margaret Furey

13 Parliament Street
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1A 2Y6

September 24, 1998

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance a thesis entitled Teachers' Descriptions of Primary Children's Reading submitted by Edith Margaret Furey in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Grace Malicky
Grace V. Malicky, Supervisor

Joyce Bainbridge
Joyce M. Bainbridge

Ruth Hayden
H. Ruth M. Hayden

Fern Snart
Fern Snart

George D Labercane
George D. Labercane, External Examiner

Date: August 26, 1998

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to explore i) what informal assessment techniques were being used by primary teachers to assess reading in Newfoundland and what procedures they thought they should be using, ii) how primary teachers analyzed information obtained from running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses, iii) the degree of consistency between teachers' and my analyses of diagnostic information, and iv) the nature of developmental trends in reading as indicated in the four assessment strategies.

Ten primary teachers of language arts and the researcher collected information across one school year on 10 students at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 3 as well as in primary special education. In individual and group meetings, teachers discussed assessment techniques they were using, felt they should be using and analyzed reading samples. The researcher also conducted an analysis of children's reading samples.

Informal reading assessment techniques frequently used by teachers included writing samples, oral reading, questions, checklists and in-head observations. Assessment techniques recommended for the study consisted of running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses. Teachers changed their views of assessment as the study progressed.

Similarities and differences in teachers' comments were noted across running records, retellings and literature responses. Most comments and concerns dealt with recall of text content on retellings and responses to literature whereas on running records, teachers focused heavily on context cues. A major focus on all assessment tasks was on how the nature of the text could affect reading.

Considerable consistency between teachers' descriptive comments and my analysis was found although some differences were also noted. On running records, teachers commented most frequently on children's use of contextual cues whereas I found that primary children used graphic cues more frequently than other cuing systems. Few developmental trends were evident in primary children's reading.

The results of the study suggested differences between teachers' beliefs and practices and confirmed the need for increased time and inservice opportunities for teachers to make effective use of informal reading assessment techniques. Further collaborative research with a broader range of teachers is recommended.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank several people for their advice and support throughout this dissertation process. Special gratitude is owing to Dr. Grace Malicky, my dissertation advisor, whose direction, consideration and encouragement were exemplary and greatly appreciated.

Dr. Ruth Hayden, Dr. Joyce Bainbridge and Dr. Fern Snart, as members of the dissertation committee, made valuable suggestions regarding the dissertation. Dr. Mona Beebe of the Department of Education, Memorial University, gave constructive comments and assisted in clarifying various sections of the document. I am most grateful to Dr. George Labercane from the University of Calgary who acted as external examiner and provided valuable insights.

My deepest appreciation is extended to my family whose understanding and support in so many ways made this dissertation possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Abstract

Acknowledgments

List of Tables

Chapter 1--Introduction 1

  Context for the Research 1

    The Canadian Context 1

    The Newfoundland Context 4

  Statement of Purposes 6

  Significance of Proposed Research 6

  Delimitations 7

Chapter 2--Review of the Literature on Informal Assessment 9

  Introduction/Definition 9

  History/Background 11

  Assessment in Relation to Theory 12

  General Characteristics of Informal Assessment 15

    Product v. Process 15

    Sampling and Selecting 16

    Recording/Documenting 18

    Reflecting and Interpreting 20

    Adaptable Assessment 21

    Dynamic Assessment 22

        Authentic Assessment 22
        Holistic Assessment 25
        Continuous Assessment 25
        Purposes, Objectives and Outcomes 26
        Child Focus 27
        Self-Assessment 29
        Personal Nature of Reading 30
        Social Nature of Reading 31
        Informal Assessment as a Learning Experience 33
        Credibility and Trustworthiness 36
    Informal Assessment in Relation to Texts and Contexts 37
        Nature of Texts 37
        Nature of Contexts 40
    Types of Informal Teacher-Based Assessment 42
        Literature Responses 42
            Information that literature responses provide 42
            How children respond to literature 44
        Retellings 47
        Running Records and Miscue Analysis 51
        Other Informal Assessment Techniques 55
    Summary 56
Chapter 3--Methodology 59
    Research Design 59

Gaining Entry 60

Participants 61

Data Collection 62

    Reading Samples 63

    Teachers' Comments 64

    Stage 1 64

    Stage 2 66

        Group Meetings 66

        Individual Meetings 67

    Researcher's Role 68

Analysis of the Data 71

    Analysis of Teachers' Comments 71

        DRS Analysis 71

    Tabulating Results 74

    Researcher's Analysis 75

        Running Records 75

        Oral and Written Retellings 75

        Literature Responses 76

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Dependability and Confirmability 77

Chapter 4--Results and Discussion of Assessment Strategies 79

Introduction 79

Teachers' Views on Assessment at the Beginning of the Study 79

Desirable Characteristics of Strategies 81

Assessment Should be Comprehensive and Meaningful 81
Assessment Should be Part of Instruction 82
Assessment Should not be too Time Consuming 83
Assessment Should be an Individualized Process and Learner-Centred . 84
Assessment Should be Enjoyable 85
Assessment Strategies Should Involve Children 85
Reading Assessment Strategies Being Used 86
Frequently Used Assessment Strategies 86
Writing samples 86
Oral reading 88
Questions 88
Checklists 88
In-the-head observations 89
Less Frequently Used Strategies 89
Response journals, retellings and cloze passages 89
Concepts About Print 89
Research and group projects and silent reading 89
Formal tests 90
Reading Assessment Strategies Teachers Felt They Should be Using 90
Running Records 90
Retellings 91
Literature Responses 93
Writing Samples 94

Other Assessment Strategies 95

Assessment Strategies Selected for the Study 97

Teachers' Changing Views Regarding Assessment 99

Summary 107

Chapter 5--Results and Discussion of Running Records 109

Running Records of Kindergarten Children 109

Graphic Cues 109

Phonic Cues 117

Contextual Cues 117

Author's Meaning 119

Other Factors 119

General Evaluative 121

Running Records of Grade 1 Children 122

Graphic Cues 122

Phonic Cues 123

Contextual Cues 124

Author's Meaning 126

Other Factors 126

General Evaluative 128

Running Records of Grade 2 Children 128

Graphic Cues 128

Phonic Cues 130

Contextual Cues 131

Author's Meaning . . . 133
Other Factors . . . 134
General Evaluative . . . 135
Running Records of Grade 3 Children . . . 136
Graphic Cues . . . 136
Phonic Cues . . . 138
Contextual Cues . . . 138
Author's Meaning . . . 140
Other Factors . . . 141
General Evaluative . . . 142
Discussion of Results on Running Records . . . 142
Graphic Cues . . . 143
Phonic Cues . . . 144
Contextual Cues . . . 145
Author's Meaning . . . 148
Other Factors . . . 148
Conclusion . . . 153
Chapter 6--Results and Discussion of Oral and Written Retellings . . . 155
Oral Retellings for Kindergarten Children . . . 155
Story Structure . . . 155
Text Focus . . . 163
Beyond Text Focus . . . 164
Comprehension . . . 164

Other Factors 165

General Evaluative 167

Oral Retellings for Grade 1 Children 167

Story Structure 167

Text Focus 168

Beyond Text Focus 169

Comprehension 169

Other Factors 171

General Evaluative 172

Oral Retellings for Grade 2 Children 172

Story Structure 173

Text Focus 175

Beyond Text Focus 176

Comprehension 176

Other Factors 177

General Evaluative 179

Oral Retellings for Grade 3 Children 179

Story Structure 179

Text Focus 182

Beyond Text Focus 184

Comprehension 185

Other Factors 187

General Evaluative 188

Written Retellings for Grade 1 Children 188
    Story Structure 193
    Text Focus 194
    Beyond Text Focus 194
    Comprehension 194
    Other Factors 195
    General Evaluative 196
Written Retellings for Grade 2 Children 196
    Story Structure 196
    Text Focus 198
    Beyond Text Focus 199
    Comprehension 200
    Other Factors 201
    General Evaluative 202
Written Retellings for Grade 3 Children 202
    Story Structure 203
    Text Focus 204
    Beyond Text Focus 205
    Comprehension 206
    Other Factors 207
    General Evaluative 208
Discussion of Results on Oral and Written Retellings 208
    Story Structure 209

Text Focus 213

Beyond Text Focus 214

Comprehension 215

Other Factors 218

General Evaluative 222

Summary 222

Chapter 7--Results and Discussion of Written Literature Responses 223

Literature Responses for Kindergarten Children 223

Type/Kind of Responses 223

Content/Text Focus 234

Personal 235

Appearance 236

Other Skills 237

General Evaluative 238

Literature Responses for Grade l Children 238

Type/Kind of Responses 238

Content/Text Focus 239

Personal 241

Appearance 243

Other Factors 244

General Evaluative 244

Literature Responses for Grade 2 Children 244

Type/Kind of Responses 245

Content/Text Focus 245

Personal 247

Appearance 250

Other Factors 251

General Evaluative 253

Literature Responses for Grade 3 Children 253

Type/Kind of Responses 257

Content/Text Focus 257

Personal 260

Appearance 261

Other Factors 263

General Evaluative 263

Discussion of Results on Literature Responses 263

Kinds of Responses 264

Content/Text Focus 265

Personal 267

Appearance 270

Other Factors 271

Summary 272

Chapter 8--Summary, Major Findings, Discussion and Implications 275

Summary 275

Major Findings 276

Assessment Techniques Newfoundland Teachers Were and Thought They Should be Using 276

Changes in Views on Assessment 277

How Teachers Analyzed Children's Reading Samples 278

Running records 278

Oral and written retellings 279

Literature responses 280

Other Factors in Reading 280

Synthesis 283

Consistency and Inconsistency Between Teachers' and my Analyses 284

Running records 284

Retellings 284

Responses 285

Synthesis 285

The Nature of Developmental Trends in Reading 286

Running records 287

Retellings 287

Literature responses 288

Synthesis 289

Implications for Practice 290

Assessment Practices 290

Beliefs and Practices 293

Implications for Theory 296

Educational Change 297

Reading Development 298

Reading as an Interactive Process 299

Implications for Further Research 301

Concluding Statement 305

References 307

Appendix A 336

Appendix B 347

Appendix C 354

Appendix D 360

Appendix E 368

Appendix F 373

Appendix G 384

LIST OF TABLES

Page

4.1 Reading Assessment Techniques Teachers are Currently Using, Felt They Should be Using and Recommended for Study 87

5.1 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Running Records Term 1 110

5.2 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Running Records Term 2 112

5.3 Researcher's Analysis of Running Records Term 1 115

5.4 Researcher's Analysis of Running Records Term 2 115

6.1 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Teachers 156

6.2 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Children in Term 1 157

6.3 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Children in Term 2 158

6.4 Researcher's Analysis of Location of Information in Children's Oral Retellings Across Grade Levels 160

6.5 Researcher's Analysis of Clausal Units in Children's Oral Retellings Across Grade Levels 161

6.6 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Grade 1, 2 and 3 Children's Written Retellings of Texts Read by Teachers 189

6.7 Researcher's Analysis of Clausal Units in Children's Written Retellings Across Grade Levels 191

6.8 Researcher's Analysis of Location in Children's Written Retellings of Passages Heard Across Grade Levels 192

7.1 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 1 224

7.2 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 2 227

7.3 Researcher's Analysis of Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 1 230

7.4 Researcher's Analysis of Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 2 232

7.5 Summary of Teachers' Comments on Grade 3 Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read Independently in Terms 1 and 2 254

7.6 Researcher's Analysis of Grade 3 Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read Independently in Terms 1 and 2 256

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Context for the Research

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the whole language movement had a significant impact on language arts instruction and, to a lesser extent, on language arts assessment across Canada. To provide a context for this study, a brief overview of the growth of whole language approach and philosophy in Canada and Newfoundland is presented. This study also explores the nature of informal assessment currently used by primary teachers in Newfoundland as well as the nature of primary students' reading development as indicated on these assessment techniques.

The Canadian Context

The growth in whole language in Canada has been influenced by initiatives in other countries. In New Zealand, Donald Holdaway's (1979) work on early literacy development promoted literature based-reading programs, a forerunner to whole language. Language across the curriculum and a focus on meaningful purposes for writing and reading were advocated in the United Kingdom's A Language for Life (Bullock, 1975) which "influenced the teaching of composition, language arts and English in all English speaking countries" (Froese, 1996, p. 4). In the early 1980s, the influence of these initiatives was beginning to be reflected in Canadian classrooms, and by the mid 1980s, K. Goodman (1986a) found that "whole language views were represented in official documents and innovative practices all across Canada" (p. 363).

Indeed, Canada was described as "on the forefront" of implementing whole language beliefs at both the classroom and provincial levels (McKay, 1993, p. 498).

Some writers believe that whole language grew quickly in North America because of the needs of classroom teachers. With their changing beliefs about language and language learning as a meaningful process, teachers found they needed to develop and share practices consistent with these views. Grassroots support-groups allowed teachers who shared the whole language philosophy to network and discuss the extent to which their practices were congruent with their beliefs (McKay, 1993). Teachers studied, discussed, researched and wrote about whole language as they searched for ways to become more knowledgeable with regard to the whole language philosophy and with ways to implement sound and congruent practices in the classroom. According to Y. Goodman (1989), part of the reason for this grassroots movement was teachers' "discontent with traditional education, e.g., rigid educational practices, use of standardized tests, prescribed textbooks and back to basics curriculum" (p. 122).

In the mid-to-late 1980s in Canada, the Whole Language Newsletter served as a support to teachers and as a means to discuss their concerns, teaching practices and newly acquired views on language learning. In 1988, at a whole-language conference in Winnipeg, the Whole Language Umbrella was organized as a confederation of support groups.

Teachers were not alone in questioning the use, content and structure of basal readers and their effects on a whole language philosophy (Murphy, 1991). Basals were described as fragmenting teaching and taking skills out of context which resulted in little actual reading by the children in classrooms (Cameron & Mickelson, 1989; Malicky, 1991). At that time, much was being written describing how whole language was consistent with theories of learning and language development which recognized the interactive, transactive, individual and social nature of learning or making meaning (Weaver, 1990). This seemed to be contradictory to the skills and drills approach of many basals.

By the early 1990s, Gordon (1991), in an examination of provincial education guidelines, found that some provinces had adopted a whole language curriculum or had recommended basal language arts programs with a literature focus. In a statement from the Canadian Psychological Association, Simner (1993) indicated that provincially approved textbooks in seven provinces reflected a whole-language philosophy with whole language accounting for approximately 75% of the provincially approved textbooks in the remaining provinces.

Teacher-based or informal assessment has been described as consistent with many of the principles of whole language and as providing a means of observing and collecting samples of students' reading development while they are engaged in real, purposeful literacy activities (Y. Goodman, 1991). Work sample folders are viewed as giving an overall view of students' progress through inclusion of dated work samples that students have produced. Because assessment information is collected in a variety of situations over a period of time, samples can be reflected upon in order to note possible patterns in development.

In her examination of assessment practices across Canada, Gordon (1991) noted that changes in assessment were occurring in Canadian classrooms as teachers made increased use of naturalistic evaluation. However, although most provincial curriculum guidelines recommended continuous, on-going observation, student, peer, teacher and parent involvement, and inclusion of evidence of the processes and products of language use, not all school boards and departments or ministries of education had implemented holistic assessment practices. Many provincial tests were described as standardized and/or product and subskills based.

It is important to note that whole language has not been without critics in Canada, particularly in recent years (Church, Portelli, MacInnis, Vibert & Kelly, 1995). The Canadian Psychological Association (Simner, 1993), for example, expressed concerns about the number of provinces and school districts in Canada using programs based on a whole language philosophy. These programs were viewed as de-emphasizing decoding which the Association felt was necessary for some children, especially those at-risk of reading failure.

The Newfoundland Context

In the 1980s, as in much of the rest of Canada, whole language was becoming popular in Newfoundland. Kenneth and Yetta Goodman visited the province several times delivering provincial inservice, and whole language was a frequent seminar topic of several provincial interest councils. In addition, provincial documents including Reading and Writing Difficulties: An Educator's Handbook (1990) and Experiencing Language: A Primary Language Curriculum Guide (1991) supported a whole language philosophy.

Various resource materials describing a whole language philosophy were made available to school districts. Some of these materials included The Whole Language Catalogue (Goodman, Bird & Goodman, 1991), The Whole Language Catalog: Supplement on Authentic Assessment (Goodman, Bird, & Goodman, 1992), Reading Miscue Inventory: Alternative Procedures (Goodman, Watson & Burke, 1987) and Creating Classrooms for Authors (Harste, Short & Burke, 1988). Although the Nelson Networks Program continued as the authorized basal resource, recommended lists of children's literature were circulated to school districts.

The use of teacher-based assessment was consistent with many of the principles of sound evaluation outlined in the provincial documents, some of those principles being comprehensiveness and process and product-based assessment. The Special Education Policy Manual (1992), Evaluation of Students in the Classroom: A Handbook and Policy Guide (1990), Reading and Writing Difficulties: An Educator's Handbook (1990) and Experiencing Language: A Primary Language Curriculum Guide (1991) have supported teacher-based assessment. Teachers were encouraged to use a combination of sources in addition to testing when evaluating students in order to encompass a wide range of students' activities and experiences. Suggestions for using a variety of informal assessment techniques have been provided in these documents. The provincial document Reading and Writing Difficulties: An Educator's Handbook (1990) was comprised of holistic assessment procedures including miscue analysis and retellings using children's literature. Although primary teachers in Newfoundland collected work samples, the nature of the samples had not been investigated.

Statement of Purposes

There were four purposes of this research:

1. to determine what informal assessment techniques are currently used by primary teachers to assess reading in Newfoundland and to discover the procedures primary teachers think they should be using;
2. to determine how primary teachers analyze information obtained from informal assessment;
3. to explore similarities and differences between the teachers' informal analyses and my analysis of the same information; and
4. to determine the nature of developmental trends in reading evident across the primary grades from these analyses.

Significance of Proposed Research

Little information is available regarding the kinds of informal assessment techniques teachers are using and the effectiveness of the various techniques. This study contributed to research in this area. By examining several components of reading development, including the role of prior knowledge and use of text as well as several forms of teacher-based assessment, the study investigated and reflected on reading development in a holistic manner. In addition, the collaborative involvement of teachers and researcher provided a more comprehensive description of children's reading development.

While writing has been a frequent component of teacher-based assessment, not as much information exists regarding teacher-based reading assessment. The value of reading samples as informal assessment information has not been well researched, e.g., the nature of teachers' anecdotal and descriptive comments as well as the relevance of these comments for instruction.

Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) maintain that teachers must have some sense of the reading development of their students if they are to be informed and effective teachers. This study examined how teachers use results on frequently used assessment techniques to reflect on and better understand their students' reading from a holistic perspective. Through further insight into the development of reading, teachers may be helped to feel more comfortable in adapting their instruction to match students' development.

Delimitations

1. Because of the amount of data to be collected, the study was restricted to 50 students (10 students at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 3 and special education) and 10 teachers. It is not possible to generalize the results of the study beyond the specific sample involved. Instead, using children's reading folders, hypotheses were generated regarding common informal assessment techniques as well as the nature of children's reading. The validity of descriptions of reading development as hypothesized in this study will ultimately be determined by teachers using them in their assessment and instruction of children.
2. Teachers' descriptions of primary children's reading were based on a limited number of specific assessment techniques. Through a majority agreement process, teachers determined which assessment techniques they most frequently used and which should constitute the focus of study on children's reading.

3. Except for running records, assessment of primary children's reading was based on product samples of oral and written retellings and written literature responses. This may not provide an accurate picture of what children were actually doing when engaged in the act of reading.

4. Only language arts teachers identified by school boards as exemplary were included in the study. These teachers were described as being well informed regarding the nature of reading development and had been involved in school board projects in the past. The extent to which these teachers' descriptions of primary children's reading development were representative of all teachers could only be determined through additional research involving more representative groups of teachers.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature on Informal Assessment

Introduction/Definition

Informal teacher-based assessment refers to the process of collecting student information through observing children during instructional interactions. It involves storing, reflecting upon and interpreting the meaning of the information collected with a focus on understanding reasons for children's performance in order to make instructional decisions (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Anthony, Johnson, Mickelson & Preece, 1991; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991). Assessment is distinguished from evaluation which involves making value judgments from assessment information.

Rather than the term informal assessment, interpretive teacher-based assessment has been proposed to describe the kinds of everyday assessments informed teachers carry out in their classrooms to describe the nature of teaching and learning (Hiebert, 1991; Wolf, 1993; Y. Goodman, 1991; Erickson, 1987). Y. Goodman (1991) maintains that this form of assessment has the most impact on children's growth in all language areas. Various terms have been used to describe informal assessment in recent years. Responsive assessment which was pioneered by Stake (1975) and extended or modified by Guba and Lincoln (1985) is an example of data gathering in uncontrived, naturally occurring classroom settings. It involves self-reflection, focusing on children's self-evaluation and selection of reading samples that demonstrate their learning (Smith, 1991). Responding or providing feedback to learners from teachers and peers is encouraged.

Responsive assessment provides a framework for portfolios and other forms of negotiated assessment.

Performance-based assessments reflect teaching approaches and instructional situations. They are responsive, requiring children to produce their own answers (Valencia & Commeyras, 1992). Alternative assessments including oral reading samples, retellings, responses to literature and portfolios have been described as performance-based assessments. Alternative assessments utilize multiple measures and multiple texts and claim to have a greater alignment of instruction and assessment (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1992). Children's growth has been profiled through interpreting and synthesizing the results of observations and holistic judgments of student outcomes on performance-based assessments (Anthony et al., 1991).

With the movement toward teacher-based assessment of children, there is greater need for teachers to be informed (Wolf, 1993). A knowledgeable or informed teacher has been described as the foundation of teacher-based assessment enabling informed judgment (Wolf, 1993; Tierney, Carter & Desari, 1991; Y. Goodman, 1985). In order to collect relevant assessment data and use it for appropriate instructional decisions, teachers need to be informed regarding the nature of reading, normal developmental patterns and the underlying assumptions of informal assessment procedures (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Wolf, 1993; Warren, 1994; Hancock, 1993b). Piaget (1973) has stated that "... you only see what you know" (p. 20) and Y. Goodman (1985) has also reiterated that "current knowledge about child language and conceptual development ... help[s] teachers know what to look for as signs of growth and development ..." (p. 11).

Teacher-based assessment entails recognition and respect for teachers' professional judgements (Hiebert, 1991; Y. Goodman, 1992d). Teachers continuously observe and assess the meaning of their observations in terms of student growth and development, integrating this information in order to make instructional and curricular decisions (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991; Valencia, 1990c; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cambourne, Turbill & Dal Santo, 1994b). While the Canadian Council of Teachers of English advises that ".. the teacher's judgment must be the main determiner of performance of his/her children," limited credibility has been given to teachers' professional abilities to assess children through their ongoing daily teaching and learning (Tchudi, 1991, p. 111). Teachers, themselves, have also given limited recognition to the trustworthiness and credibility of their own judgments (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Valencia, 1990a; Hiebert, 1991; Wolf, 1993). However, there is growing recognition of the usefulness, comprehensiveness and adequacy of teachers' informal observations, judgments and intuitions as an appropriate means to assess complex language behaviour (Turbill, 1994; Cambourne, et al., 1994a). The teacher is recognized as responsive to personal and environmental cues that exist in the assessment context, as adaptable, and as capable of collecting, clarifying, processing, summarizing and triangulating information about multiple factors at multiple levels (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994b; Williams, 1994).

History/Background

In recent years, there has been greater utilization of teacher-based assessment with specific interest in performance and alternative types of authentic assessment (Wiggins, 1989; Wolf, LeMahiew & Eresh, 1992; Valencia, McGinley & Pearson, 1990; Valencia, 1990c). Valencia (1990a) notes that "perhaps the most dramatic change we have begun to see and will continue to see is a renewed emphasis on classroom assessment" (p. 60).

Various reasons have been proposed for increased use of teacher-based assessment. One of these is dissatisfaction with formal traditional models of assessment to describe reading ability (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Cambourne et al., 1994a). As well, the validity of standardized tests and the appropriateness of standardized assessment for decision-making for young children have been questioned (Sheppard, 1989; Hiebert, Valencia & Afflerbach, 1994; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Paris & Ayres, 1994). There is also a growing realization that standardized tests do not sample authentic abilities or real world reading (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1990; Anthony et al., 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994). Formal assessment is believed to distort instructional practices as teachers teach precise test content rather than the underlying concepts (Haertel, 1990). Standardized test data are rarely understood by children or their parents and allow little student, parent and teacher involvement, resulting in their disempowerment (Koretz, as cited by Pikulski, 1990; Johns & Van Liersburg, 1990). Informal assessment is viewed as a reaction to the decontextualized measures that have been developed outside the classroom context, e.g., criterion-referenced measures, district exams and provincial tests. Decontextualized assessment separates assessment from instruction and offers limited interaction between reader, text and context (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Kragler, 1996).

Assessment in Relation to Theory

Approaches to reading assessment have not kept pace with recent advances in reading research, theory and practices. They often do not reflect recent knowledge regarding the nature of the reading process and reading development (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Paradis, Chatton, Boswell, Smith, & Yowich, 1991; Valencia, 1990a). Informal assessment has been described as a reaction to reductionist forms of assessment that reflect fragmented and linear sequences of individual reading skills and provide simplistic and misleading information (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cambourne et al., 1994a). The International Reading Association resolved in 1988 that assessment measures defining reading as a sequence of discrete skills be discouraged (International Reading Association, 1991). In addition, there is growing teacher discontent with the gap between recent social-constructivist frameworks and theoretical and philosophical assumptions of traditional assessment (Cambourne et al., 1994a; K. Goodman, 1992a; Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985). Researchers are recognizing that a single assessment at a single moment in time under a single specific set of conditions does not reflect the complex and contextual nature of reading (Anthony et al., 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994).

Changing conceptualizations of the nature of reading and the reading process have contributed to changes in perceptions and practices regarding reading assessment (Valencia & Peters, 1991; Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). The need for assessment strategies to parallel or be congruent with current knowledge and theories regarding language learning and the reading process, its purposes, roles and development has been recognized (Glazer, Searfoss & Gentils, 1988; Harste, 1994; K. Goodman, 1992a; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Mathie, 1994; Wolf, 1993). Researchers emphasize that assessment should be interpreted within the same framework, theories and practices of language teaching that underlie instruction (Anthony et al., 1991; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Johns, 1994). Holistic, functional, naturalistic and child-centered theories of language learning support authentic assessment (K. Goodman, 1989; Y. Goodman, 1991; Clay, 1985; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994b).

Assessment reflects teachers' beliefs and theories about reading and reading development and is influenced by teachers' prior knowledge, past experiences and current interests (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Turbill, 1994; Bird, 1992). In their research, Cambourne and Turbill (1994) found that teachers' implicit beliefs played a crucial role in the processes of assessment, evaluation and teaching. Beliefs are the theoretical foundation of assessment and evaluation, forming teachers' paradigms or sets of lenses for assessment (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Anthony et al., 1991). Beliefs determine assessment techniques as well as teachers' interpretations of children's processes and products (Hiebert, 1991; Williams, 1994).

A whole language philosophy is consistent with portfolio assessment (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Irwin-De Vitis, 1996; Freeman & Freeman, 1992). Literature responses, retellings and miscue analysis assess the interactive nature of the reading process including the interaction of readers' background knowledge and experiences with the author's ideas to create meaning (Anderson, 1985; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Bembridge, 1992). These assessment techniques have also been described as consistent with transactive theories of reading as readers actively engage in a personal reconstruction of text meaning (Botel & Lytle, 1988; Morrow, 1989a; Y. Goodman, 1992f).

General Characteristics of Informal Assessment

Product v Process

It has been proposed that instead of methods of evaluation, comprehensive frameworks should be used to gather and interpret data in consistent and coherent ways (Turbill, 1994). Most frameworks consist of the general assessment categories of process and product. Some researchers believe that assessment should be process rather than product focused and maintain that reliance on products alone results in a letter grade or score that inadequately summarizes human performance and offers little information for continuous instructional planning (Harp, 1988; Paradis et al., 1991; K. Goodman, 1967; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Anthony et al., 1991; Y. Goodman, 1985; Green, 1994). Other researchers recognize the need for assessment that integrates and assesses both process and product information (Farr, Lewis, Faszholz, Pinsky, Towle, Lipschutz & Pruitt, 1990; Wolf, 1993; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cambourne & Turbill, 1990; Anthony et al., 1991). They claim that process and product cannot be assessed separately and that authentic assessment examines the processes as well as the products of learning. Farr & Lowe (1994) maintain that process is product, the goal of literacy development being children who use effective reading strategies. They note, "Process can only inform instructional decisions if it is related to the products that are the results of these processes. It is through the construction of products that a student demonstrates the necessary processes to construct the product" (p. 72). Tools to assess products include reading samples, reading logs, journals, reading miscues, retellings, projects, self-assessments and interest inventories (Williams, 1994; Hiebert, 1991; Cambourne et al., 1994a; Y. Goodman, 1991).

Process information is essential to assist children in their development as readers (Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Valencia & Pearson, 1987). Essential process-focused instructional areas which can be assessed include reading strategies, interrelation and application of language cuing systems to construct meaning, metacognitive strategies such as self-monitoring, use of word and story structure clues, problem-solving skills, ability to organize information and to skim, scan, summarize and sequence events, rereading, making inferences, relating text information to personal experiences, and views of self as a reader including attitudes, motivation and uses for reading (Simms, 1994; Paradis et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Smith, 1991; Hiebert, 1991; Valencia & Pearson,1987; Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Harp, 1991). Strategies for gathering process data include anecdotal records of observations, interviews, conferences, questioning and interactions, literature responses, text reconstructing and self-evaluating.

Sampling and Selecting

Informal assessment consists of relevant concrete evidence or samples purposefully and carefully selected from a variety of reading contexts (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, 1990a). Johns (1994) and Wolf (1993) note that for useful, meaningful information, an organized and manageable collection of information is necessary. Through the selection of important reading assessment strategies that reflect the objectives of learning, as well as the needs and interests of children, their ongoing development and competencies as readers are more adequately described (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Sutherland, 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993).

Sampling children's work is not a new concept and Brewer (1989) has noted that using samples of work that come from everyday settings is restructuring assessment. However, the more recent and frequently used portfolio assessment is more than a collection of forms or folders collected over a period of time (Hiebert, 1991; Johns, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Tierney et al., 1991; Glazer et al., 1993; Y. Goodman, 1992a). Samples for portfolios are gathered in an organized way giving structure for the teacher and children (Harp, 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994).

The collection of work samples provides direct evidence of learning including information regarding strengths and needs (Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Collins & Moss, 1996). Samples are collected to assess cognitive skills, important reading skills, processes or strategies, self-perceptions of interests in reading, attitudes and motivation (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Graham, 1994). Portfolios measure growth over time and have been described as documents of change regarding children's thinking and reading development (Krest, 1990; Johns & Van Liersburg, 1990; Sorenson, 1993). They are viewed as offering a complex and comprehensive view of student progress through collaborative, authentic and multidimensional assessment tasks (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994).

Educators using portfolios have frequently included anecdotal records, reading samples, interviews and conferencing notes with children and parents, checklists, reading logs of materials read, half-formed thoughts and works in progress, sketches, photographs, questions, peer feedback, self-evaluation, and progress notes prepared by teachers and children (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Wolf, 1989; Valencia, 1990a; DeLawter & Hendsch, 1992; Y. Goodman, 1992a; Johns, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Portfolios also include information collected outside the classroom including parents' and children's observations of reading (Wiser & Dorsey, 1994).

However, Farr and Lowe (1994) note that while portfolios are one means to meet language arts objectives, they are not the panacea to our assessment concerns. Practical management concerns regarding planning, organizing, record keeping and communicating with parents and children have to be addressed (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Simms, 1994).

Recording/Documenting

Careful observations have been recognized as one of the frequently used features of teacher-based assessment (Y. Goodman, 1985) and have been identified by teachers as their most important source of information (Hiebert, 1991; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Williams, 1994; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Wiser & Dorsey, 1994). Observing involves careful "kidwatching" and documenting of children in authentic literacy events (Y. Goodman, 1985).

Various ways to record observations have been suggested including anecdotal records and checklists (Johns, 1994; Valencia et al., 1990; Bintz & Harste, 1990). Anecdotal recording of observations is an important source of record keeping and involves the sensitive, systematic and selective gathering and recording of process and product focused observations (Y. Goodman, 1985, 1992a; Harp, 1991; Hiebert, 1991; Woodward, 1992; Anthony et al., 1991). Anecdotal observations are everyday brief, jotted notes recorded during and after an observation and contain enough detail to serve as functional tools for the teaching of reading (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Simms, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991; Y. Goodman, 1992a).

Teachers have been noted to mentally record observations or "critical incidents," often recording little information in written form for ongoing instructional planning (Cambourne et al., 1994a; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Simms, 1994). Various reasons have been proposed for lack of written observations. Harste (1994) believes that teachers are more interested in giving children meaningful experiences than recording, and Hiebert (1991) explains that documenting all their observations is an impossible task for teachers.

Cambourne and Turbill (1994b) describe this evaluation record "in the teacher's head" as the most significant evaluation record or source of information and researchers emphasize that recording observations enables teachers to turn their tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge (Cambourne et al., 1994a; Stanley, 1996; Bird, 1989). It is believed that through the more conscious act of written recording and systematically focusing and reflecting on their observations, teachers become more informed regarding the reading process and children's reading development, improve their observational skills, compare observations over time and more effectively communicate information with parents and children (Anthony et al., 1991; Simms, 1994; Bird, 1989; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Wolf (1993) advises that "... without some form of documentation much of what has been seen will be either forgotten or, more likely remembered in a form that scarcely resembles the original artifact or event" (p. 519).

Reflecting and Interpreting

In addition to sparse written recording, little information is systematically analyzed in most classrooms for instructional planning, much reliance being placed instead on teacher intuition (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Y. Goodman, 1991). Cambourne et al. (1994b) and Stanley (1996, p. 110) explain how teachers in their studies often interpreted data "on the run," quickly cross checking their mental notes, drawing conclusions and making decisions based on their mental notes or "on the run" interpretations. Teachers' "internal unconscious interpretive frame" formed from values and tacit knowledge is described as the basis or framework for mental notes and "on the run" interpretations (ibid.). Researchers emphasize that in addition to recording, teachers need to effectively analyze and use assessment information for instructional planning (Farr & Beck, 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993).

In recent years, there has been more emphasis on interpretation of patterns of learning and analysis of error patterns (Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Hiebert, 1991). There is increased recognition that observing patterns and analyzing reasons provides more useful information regarding children's knowledge and application about reading than counting errors.

The importance of children reflecting on their reading development has also gained recognition (Rothwell-Wagner & Brock, 1996; Hiebert, 1991; Y. Goodman, 1992f). Through reflecting on their learning, children become motivated, self-regulated or self-directed and independent readers (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Adaptable Assessment

Informal assessment tasks can be adapted to the specific focus and purpose(s) of the assessment task. Clay (1985) notes, for example, that running records can be adapted to the teacher's needs in day to day activities of the classroom, particularly for young children. Y. Goodman (1992e) describes alternative ways to analyze miscues ranging from analysis of each miscue within the sentence and text to analysis in informal reading conference settings, and Marzano, Haggerty, Valencia, & DiStefano (1987) note that the entire miscue procedure does not need to be administered. Observations can be planned or spontaneous, observed in informal or formal settings and anecdotal recording can occur for whole classrooms or individuals (Pils, 1992; Anthony et al., 1991). Children can respond to questions in interviews or conferences and can provide retellings orally or in writing (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Response to literature can occur orally, in written form or through Readers' Theatre, role playing, choral speaking, drama and art activities (Kelly, 1990; Monson, 1986; Hickman, 1981). Self-assessment can be open-ended or the information may be obtained through questions regarding specific categories (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991). Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) noted the need for checklists to change as children change in order to capture children's varying abilities and interests.

Informal assessment tasks can be combined to give a comprehensive view of reading processes and products (Hiebert, 1991; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Subjective assessments can be supplemented with anecdotal records of daily observations (Harp, 1991). Portfolios contain information from multiple sources and can be used in conjunction with district assessments and class grades (Johns, 1994).

Dynamic Assessment

In addition to assessment of unassisted performance, children's assisted performance during instruction can be assessed to determine potential development as well as the amount and type of assistance needed to perform tasks (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Valencia, 1990a; Wolf, 1993). Dynamic assessment is based on Vygotskian sociohistorical and social constructivist theories (Stanley, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978; Hiebert, 1991). Children have been found to read and comprehend texts two to three levels higher when informal reading inventories are modified to a dynamic assessment of their assisted performance (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Newman, 1992; Stanley, 1996; Kragler, 1991). Assessments that incorporate trial interventions, questioning, interviewing and conferencing have been described as forms of dynamic assessment that permit observation and understanding of children's zone of proximal development and more accurate estimations of children's reading levels (Vygotsky, 1978; Hiebert, 1991; Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Authentic Assessment

A key feature of authentic assessment is its link to instruction, curriculum and the learning processes through planning and improving instruction for individual children based on their development or strengths and interests (Anthony et al., 1991; Hiebert, 1991; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Johnston, 1987; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Authentic assessment entails naturalistic assessment strategies which occur simultaneously with or during instruction and inform that instruction, being woven into every aspect of the everyday reading experiences of children (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Y. Goodman, 1992a; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Valencia, 1990a; Turbill, 1994a; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Anthony et al., 1991; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Hiebert (1991) claims that authentic assessment is embedded in instruction rather than running parallel to it. Instruction and assessment have been described as mutually informative and symbiotic, being complementary or compatible aspects of teaching and learning. Commonalities include the processes of setting goals and purposes, gathering information and interpreting and acting on the information (Farr et al., 1990; Paris & Ayres, 1994).

Assessment and instruction are aligned with each other as teachers monitor children's development while teaching them and assess what is valued in instruction (Lipson & Wixson, 1991; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Calfee & Hiebert, 1991; Farr & Beck, 1991; Bembridge, 1992; Anthony et al., 1991; Paradis et al., 1991; Cambourne & Turbill, 1990). Everyday classroom activities have been described as rich sources of assessment information of the content of children's knowledge, as well as their processes of learning (Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991). In addition, the teacher can continue to extend conceptual understandings and reading strategies while observing and conferencing (Y. Goodman, 1992d).

Many informal assessment tasks have been described as 'natural' instructional activities (Johns, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Informal teacher-based assessment allows assessment of critical literacy goals including learning and reading processes (Hiebert, 1991; Cambourne, Turbill & Dal Santo, 1994a). Comprehension is assessed within the literacy events of retellings, literature responses, think alouds and interviews (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Wolf, 1993). Being contextually grounded, spontaneous and naturalistic, retellings assess the way comprehension is displayed in real life (Anthony et al., 1991). In addition, Applebee (1978) explains that retellings assess sense of story which is a basic facet of children's way of remembering. Interviewing and classroom observations take place in authentic situations that are part of normal instruction (Paris & Ayres, 1994). Systematic notes can be recorded while children read to others in small groups, during conferences and when reading to parents (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Questioning involves daily interaction between teachers and children in typical classroom contexts (Hiebert, 1991). Portfolios sample children's language arts performance that is closely linked to instruction and inform instruction by being actual artifacts of desired goals (Jongsma, 1989; Farr & Lowe, 1994; DeLawter & Hendsch, 1992; Johns, 1994). Miscue analysis and running records have been described as natural, authentic assessments. Other classroom measures including teacher-made unit and concept tests, projects and tasks have also been described as forms of authentic assessment (Anthony et al., 1991).

Informal authentic assessment involves multiple sources of information including meaningful classroom reading content that is motivational, of interest and appropriate to children's developmental levels (Paris & Ayres, 1994). Authentic assessment requires several texts since younger age children have not been found to have a consistent way of responding across texts and the meaning-making process often changes with each book (Purves, 1975; Hancock, 1993a; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Bird, 1992). In addition to meaningful classroom reading tasks, authentic assessment involves meaningful real functional uses or purposes of language faced by readers in the real world (Sheppard, 1989; Wiggins, 1989; Anthony et al., 1991; Paradis et al., 1991; K. Goodman, 1992; Cambourne et al., 1994; Y. Goodman, 1992c; Johns, 1994). However, while some writers maintain that assessment strategies should be aligned with curriculum, matching assessment objectives to curriculum has also been claimed to have a homogenizing effect, limiting assessment coverage (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Sheppard, 1989; Valencia et al., 1994; Paris & Ayres, 1994).

Holistic Assessment

Informal assessment reflects holistic concepts of reading development (Green, 1994; Valencia, 1990a). Holistic assessment procedures are learner-driven data collection procedures which assess whole learning or the whole child including cognitive, affective, intellectual, sensory and physical development (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Cambourne, 1994; Holdaway, 1979; Williams, 1994). Portfolios, for example, have been described as a means of looking at children holistically and profiles often involve holistic judgments as teachers rate children on each band of related indicators (Harp, 1988). Holistic assessment integrates the language arts.

Continuous Assessment

Informal assessment is an ongoing, reflective process as teachers collect, interpret and use assessment information while children read in everyday instructional situations

(Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Hiebert, 1991; Green, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994). Because no individual conforms to specific age-based expectations and development is often uneven and unpredictable, the need to gather information about the full range of children's repertoires over an extended period of time is recognized (Valencia et al., 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1992a; Harp, 1991; Anthony et al., 1991). Rather than assessment occurring after instruction as an imposed situation, Graham (1994) and Y. Goodman (1991) have noted that assessment gives most significant information if it occurs continuously and simultaneously with learning experiences. Ongoing periodic sampling of children's reading, for example, is required in order for them to become meaning-constructing readers (Hiebert, 1991; Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Harp, 1991). Retellings and portfolios have also been described as examples of continuous assessment techniques (Smith & Keister, 1996).

Purposes, Objectives and Outcomes

Teacher-based assessment recognizes the importance of aligning assessment with the purposes or objectives of the reading activity (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Bintz & Harste, 1990; Tierney et al., 1991; Turbill, 1994; Bird, 1992). Kapinus (1994) emphasizes that the reader constructs meaning in different ways depending on the purpose. Clear objectives or purposes enable a more organized accumulation of useful information through selecting assessment tasks that are compatible with the purposes of assessment (Johns, 1994; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Tierney et al., 1991).

Monitoring the outcomes of instruction has been described as one of the major aims of assessment as outlined in the International Reading Association's resolutions

(International Reading Association, 1994). Paris and Ayres (1994) and Anthony et al. (1991) recommend that the ultimate goal should be children's internalization of the standards and evolving their own intrinsic standards and criteria. However, shortcomings of basing assessment on outcomes and standards have also been identified. Graham (1994) cautions that while there are common markers in development, outcomes ignore the individuality of each child. Outcomes are also believed to focus on easily quantified behaviours (Brandt, 1989).

Child Focus

Authentic informal assessment actively involves children in their own learning (Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). The fundamental purpose of assessment is to promote optimal, meaningful instruction and learning through eliciting children's genuine effort and motivation for the assessment task (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Paradis et al., 1991; Green, 1994).

Cambourne et al. (1994a) note that authentic assessment cannot exist unless the learner is involved in the meaning-making process. Assessment tasks requiring children to transform meaning actively involve them in their own learning (Turbill, 1994; Piaget, 1960). The open-ended nature of retellings and literature responses, for example, gives children control over the tasks allowing them to retell or respond to what they consider important (Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Portfolios are also described as being learner-centered. They imply an active view of teaching and learning as children collect artifacts and reflect on them (Wolf, 1993; Rothwell-Wagner & Brock, 1996).

Deviations or miscues are viewed as clues to what children know rather than mistakes to be corrected (Hiebert, 1991).

Children's knowledge of literature, how texts are constructed, genre, topic, concepts, vocabulary and previous experiences with texts and with the author have been found to determine how they make meaning (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Galda, 1980; Bunbury, 1985; Anderson et al., 1985; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991). Purves (1975) noted, for example, that readers' background or knowledge schemata influence responses. He concluded that "It is what the reader brings to the text as much as the text itself that determines the nature of the response"(p. 463).

Sociocultural background including the extent of literacy at home has been reported to affect reading performance (Heath, 1983; Pryor, 1996; Smith & Keister, 1996). Galda (1982) noted, for example, that socioeconomic status affects children's responses. Children's facility with oral and written language (Hickman, 1981; Smith & Keister, 1996) and their knowledge of language conventions, strategies and interactions of cuing systems (K. Goodman, 1973) have been associated with reading performance.

Another significant area is children's cognitive ability including learning styles. Cognitive ability has been found to contribute to literature responses (Galda, 1982; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Applebee, 1978). Bunbury (1985) noted, for example, the effects of cognitive constraints on children's development of story schema. Children's age has also been considered an important factor in their retellings and responses (Smith & Keister, 1996; Galda, 1982).

In addition to cognitive ability, personal and affective factors have been found to contribute to reading performance (Blunt, 1977). Children's interest in the topic and in reading have been associated with reading success (Farr & Lowe, 1994). Cullinan et al. (1983) and Y. Goodman (1992c) noted that the quality of children's retellings were influenced by their like or dislike for a particular text. Personal preferences and personality have also been reported to influence responses (Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Galda, 1982), and children's confidence in themselves as readers has been related to oral reading proficiency (Pryor, 1996).

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is embedded in many informal assessment tasks (Harste, 1994; Bladen, 1994; Rothwell-Wagner & Brock, 1996; Paris & Byrnes, 1990). Self-assessment involves children monitoring and reviewing their own and peers' progress towards goals as well as their attitudes and interests. Rothwell-Wagner and Brock (1996) described documenting one's own learning as an empowering experience and Sorenson (1993) noted that self-awareness is the highest aim of evaluation.

Primary children have been found to be capable of engaging in self-assessment and to be reliable and natural evaluators (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991). Paris and Ayres (1994) reported that children from first grade on engage in self-evaluation and internalize the standards and processes that teachers advocate and model.

Johns and Van Liersburg (1994) described self-evaluation as a key component of portfolio assessment, being used by more than 80% of teachers using portfolios. Simms (1994) described dialogue and learning journals as encouraging self-assessment.

Goodman, Watson and Burke (1987) noted that questioning and interviewing help children become more reflective and to self-assess their comprehension. Anecdotal records can also be used to help children see their growth as readers and identify needs and goals (Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992; Y. Goodman, 1992a). Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) reported that when responding and retelling, children reflect on their ability to read narrative texts. Retrospective miscue analysis allows children to self-reflect and qualitatively assess their miscues and strategies used (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993).

Personal Nature of Reading

Informal assessment is also defined as a personal activity as children are given maximum input, control and responsibility over their own assessment and learning. Through an individualized process that changes to accommodate their needs, interests and abilities, children can define their own personally meaningful goals or purposes, select personally relevant activities and choose their own texts and audience (Warren, 1994; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Rothwell-Wagner & Brock, 1996; Paris & Ayres, 1994). Informal assessment involves children in an active process of constructing meaning as they relate texts to their own background experiences and integrate their own interpretations of the text into their individual reality or schemata to construct a personal text (Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Sutherland, 1991; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Smith & Keister, 1996; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Harste, 1994).

Informal assessment can reflect the developmental nature of reading as well as the individualistic nature of reading development (Galda, 1982; Hynds, 1989; Beach, 1973;

Bird, 1992). Differences in responses are found among children at the same grade level and within one child over time (Kiefer, 1983). When retelling, for example, children give individual interpretations of text information by relating texts to their own experiences and retell texts using their own words and structure (Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Morrow, 1988; Y. Goodman, 1992a). Responses encourage personal expression, being tailored to each child's interests, needs, knowledge, experiences and emotions (Hancock, 1993b; Pils, 1992; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991). Self-evaluation also focuses on individual achievement rather than competition or comparisons (Anthony et al., 1991).

Social Nature of Reading

Informal assessment also recognizes the social nature of reading development and the need to include the social context of learning and instruction in literacy assessment (Vygotsky, 1978; Y. Goodman, 1985; Cambourne et al., 1994a; Dixon-Krauss, 1996). Harp (1991) notes that the social nature of literacy has impact on changing views of literacy assessment.

Informal assessment procedures often involve collaborative interactions between children, parents, teacher and peers (Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Through reflections and discussions, parents, children and teachers negotiate the goals, content and nature of assessment. This collaborative construction results in deeper reflection and generation of rich, quality data (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Cambourne et al., 1994a; Anthony et al., 1991; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Green, 1994; Simms, 1994; K. Goodman et al., 1989; Atwell, 1987).

Responses and retellings support social interaction as they are shared with teachers and/or peers who validate or confirm readers' thoughts and understandings (Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). Portfolios also encourage collaboration between children, parent(s) and teacher through active involvement in collaboratively determining criteria for the inclusion of samples in portfolios, selecting samples and an audience, discussing progress and reflecting on children's effort (Jongsma, 1989; Johns, 1994; Cambourne et al., 1994a; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, 1990c; Simms, 1994).

Collaborative assessment recognizes a changing role of teachers as no longer solely responsible for assessment. With the changing role of teachers from objective observer to teacher-as-participant, teachers spend less time being in charge of verifying student learning and children more actively participate in assessment and negotiate curriculum with teachers (Bembridge, 1992; Turbill,1994; Hiebert, 1991). Teachers are co-learners or participant observers with children, parents and other teachers sharing their ideas and responses (Stanley, 1996; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Farr et al., 1990; Anthony et al., 1991). Through social interaction and collaboration, teachers are mediators of children's learning within their zone of proximal development (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Collaborative assessment gives children a central role in learning as they are informed regarding objectives and criteria and define their own purposes before beginning the assessment task (Green, 1994; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Rothwell-Wagner & Brock, 1996; Dixon-Krauss, 1996). Through children's involvement in the collaborative assessment process, they become independent self-directed readers, developing ownership and taking responsibility for their learning (Smith, 1991; Green, 1994). Through meaningful conversations with other learners, they extend their understandings and knowledge (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994).

In addition to helping address parents' concerns, informal assessment recognizes parents as valuable resources regarding their children's reading and in turn provides parents with insights into their children's learning (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a; Simms, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991). Through interviews, checklists, surveys, profiles and narrative reports, parents provide information regarding their children's reading development as well as physical, medical and personal information (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Bintz & Harste, 1990; Paris & Ayres, 1994). Parents are also becoming involved in the reporting process (Turbill, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991).

Informal Assessment as a Learning Experience

It has been proposed that informal assessment develops reading skills concurrently with assessing them, enabling children to become more able readers (Anthony et al., 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Wiggins, 1989). By encouraging self-regulated learners who critically reflect on the products and processes of their learning, informal assessment leads to deeper self-assessment and insights into their knowledge, skills and needs (Anthony et al., 1991; Rasinski, 1995). Through retellings, for example, children learn to reflect on and self-evaluate their development as learners and readers as they generate and ask and answer their own questions (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Simms, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1992a; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Smith & Keister, 1996). Conferencing and responses to literature help children develop self-awareness about their processes of reading and how they construct meaning (Farr & Lowe, 1994). Children give more effective retellings and literature responses through comparing and contrasting retellings and responses to the same text, further reflecting upon their personal interpretations (Rupert & Brueggen, 1986; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Warren, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993).

Informal assessment has contributed to improved facility with oral and written language as noted in children's communication of more elaborate and refined ideas (Morrow, 1989b; Brown & Cambourne, 1987). Retellings and responses, for example, were found to improve oral language complexity (Morrow, 1985; Anthony et al., 1991; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Kelly, 1990). Response journals have developed children's appreciation and understanding of literary elements, techniques and qualities of literature (Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Kelly, 1990). Storyreading and retellings familiarize children with literary conventions and develop their sense of story structure, genre and specific conventions (Anderson, 1985; Morrow, 1984, 1985; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Gambrell, Pfeiffer & Wilson, 1985; Mandler & DeForest, 1977).

Retellings and responses have also been described as valuable means of improving reading comprehension (Farr et al., 1990; Zimiles & Kuhns, 1976; Morrow, 1984). Additional probing questions in retellings assist children in making important connections while reaching deeper levels of understanding (Green, 1994). Literature responses encourage fuller, deeper understanding of texts as children go beyond literal recall of text, to reflect more on their reading and to expand peers' understanding of texts

(Eeds & Wells, 1989; Sutherland, 1991; Barone, 1990; Kelly, 1990). Responding to literature develops children's abilities as critical thinkers as they interpret, share opinions, reconsider and explore implications of perspectives (Farr et al., 1990; Simpson, 1986; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Literature responses also extend children's efforts at constructing personal meaning through making personal connections with texts and relating texts to individual experiences (Hancock, 1992; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). Through synthesizing selected ideas, sensations, feelings and images into new experiences, literature responses encourage a transaction between the reader and text, resulting in individual evocations or literary responses (Rosenblatt, 1985).

In addition to improved student learning, informal assessment improves teaching through expanding teachers' professional sense or intuitions as well as their concept of themselves as teachers (Paris & Ayres, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991, 1992d). When informally assessing children's reading development, teachers continuously and collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching and assessment techniques and take ownership for more effective teaching practices (Bird, 1992; Wolf, 1993; Hiebert, 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1992d). According to Dewey (as cited by Y. Goodman, 1991) reflective thinking encourages foresight and planning of the consequences of actions "... emancipat[ing] us from merely impulsive and routine activity ... into intelligent action" (p. 505).

Through sharing, discussing and reflecting with children and fellow teachers, teachers have reported increased confidence in their observations and judgments about student growth and development and noted more enjoyment of teaching (Bladen, 1994;

Simms, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Mathie, 1994; Cambourne et al., 1994b). Mathie (1994) also reported that teachers' unverbalizable belief systems changed to more explicit, clearly articulated and definitive principles contributing towards increased empowerment.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Researchers disagree regarding the rigor, authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness of informal assessment strategies (Haertel, 1992; Linn, Baker & Dunbar, 1991; Cambourne et al., 1994a; Turbill, 1994; Green, 1994). Anthony et al. (1991) describe observation as giving rigorous, valid and reliable descriptions of progress. Smith and Keister (1996) describe retellings as reliable assessment methods. Johns and Van Liersburg (1992) note that portfolios provide valid and specific information for decision-making.

However, Hiebert (1991) recognizes the need for teachers to consciously consider the credibility and trustworthiness of informal assessment information. Cambourne et al. (1994a) and Turbill (1994) also identify the need for strategies to reduce subjectivity, bias and prejudice in order to increase consistency in conclusions. Valencia and Peters (1991) recommend that attempts be undertaken to provide more authentic informal assessment.

Trustworthy or dependable estimates of what children know and can do are strengthened through shared agreed-upon criteria, interrater agreement, involvement of children and parents, and clearly established and articulated procedures for gathering and evaluating the information (Valencia, 1990a; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Wiggins, 1989; Bintz

& Harste, 1990). Anthony et al. (1991) note that meaningful involvement of key stakeholders helps ensure balanced, comprehensive and trustworthy assessment.

The collection of multiple sources of data from a variety of contexts over an extended period of time increases the likelihood of eliciting children's genuine efforts as well as generalization to other related tasks (Cambourne et al., 1994a; Simms, 1994; Valencia, 1990b). Assessment using different types of texts for different purposes in typical meaningful classroom-based activities helps ensure content validity (Hiebert, 1991; Linn, Baker & Dunbar, 1991). In addition to the comprehensiveness of content, the prior teaching of processes to be assessed increases the likelihood of fair assessment (Bladen, 1994).

Informal Assessment in Relation to Texts and Contexts

Each reading event is unique involving many reader, text and situational factors. Farr and Lowe (1994) and Wolf (1993) explain that what is assessed and how it is interpreted depends on the teacher, context, child and text.

Nature of Texts

The impact of the nature of the text on oral reading, retellings and responses has been recognized by several researchers (Anthony et al., 1991; Kiefer, 1983; Farr & Lowe, 1994). Hancock (1993b) states that the nature of texts influences the type, quality and quantity of written responses and Bunbury (1985) notes that text difficulty influences ability to give inferential responses. Anthony et al. (1991) explain that retelling criteria depend on characteristics of the text and should reflect the text's content, significance, and impact.

The difficulty level of texts is an important issue in reading assessment. Blunt (1977) and Wollman-Bonilla (1989) state that texts for responses should be consistent with children's reading abilities. Researchers maintain that texts for running records and literature responses should be challenging but manageable (Valencia 1990b; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Dixon-Krauss, 1996). Y. Goodman et al. (1987) recommend texts one grade level above the child's current reading level for miscue analysis.

Valencia and Peters (1991) emphasize the importance of texts being conceptually appropriate. Bunbury (1985) and Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) describe the density or difficulty of concepts as affecting responses and retellings. Paris and Ayres (1994) and Wollman-Bonilla (1989) note that plots should be complex but not too complicated and should have appropriate complexity of characterization and development. Researchers recommend content consisting of rich ideas that stimulate children to go beyond the literal level and engage in higher order thinking skills of interpreting, analyzing, applying and making personal judgments about information (Valencia & Sulzby, 1991; Valencia & Peters, 1991; Kiefer, 1983; Blunt, 1977). In addition, they maintain that content should be consistent with the goals of the curriculum and with individual children's background and knowledge (Valencia & Peters, 1991; Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, 1990b; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cianciolo, 1988).

Blunt (1977), Cianciolo (1988) and Valencia (1990b) have identified the need for stories that are longer and more involved but not too long and complicated. For example, Anthony et al. (1991), Y. Goodman et al. (1987) and Rhodes & Shanklin (1993) note the importance of selecting naturally occurring whole texts including entire articles or chapters from a novel for running records, responses and retellings.

Emotional identification with texts affects reading performance. Interesting, familiar or popular content that reflects children's preoccupations increases predictability and makes reading easier (Wollman-Bonilla, 199l; Galda, 1982; Hancock, 1993a; Morrow, 1989b; Valencia, 1990b). Cianciolo (1988) notes that emotional identification is likely when text content is comparable to the reader's own experiences and when text and illustrations indicate sincere human emotions. Hancock (1993a) suggests that a mix of male and female characters at the age of the reader would enhance emotional identification.

The quality of text language also affects reading performance. Familiar text language having a natural flow helps children to utilize their experiential knowledge thus facilitating comprehension (Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, 1990b; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Syntax and vocabulary have been noted to affect the quality of oral reading, responses and retellings (Galda, 1982; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Y. Goodman, 1992c). Rhodes (1979) found that more predictable language encouraged Grade l children to attend to the meaning of texts. Morrow (1989b) reported that the presence of repetitive phrases, rhyme and conversation affected responses and retellings. The presence of effective and vivid language regarding characters, action, setting and atmosphere have also been found to influence responses (Galda, 1982; Hancock, 1993b; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Cianciolo, 1988; Bunbury, 1985).

Structural characteristics of narrative and expository texts and the presence of titles and subtitles have been noted to influence reading (Valencia, 1990b; Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Y. Goodman, 1992c). Children's oral and written retellings were influenced by texts that have good plot structures with easy to follow story lines. Stein and Glenn (1975) reported that the regular sequence of setting, initiating event and external response affected responses to narrative.

The presence and quality of additional cuing systems within texts including pictures, captions, charts and graphs have been reported to determine use of inference, semantics, syntax, graphophonics and pragmatics (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Valencia, 1990b; Morrow, 1988). Cianciolo (1988) also reported that graphics affected responses and Bartelo (1984) noted that detailed illustrations assisted children in giving longer retellings.

Nature of Contexts

Informal assessment encourages teachers to observe and document children's performance across diverse contexts and over time (Wolf, 1993). Settings, instructional methods and tasks have been described as affecting children's reading development (Wolf, 1993). For example, classroom context has been found to determine the richness and depth of children's responses (Hickman, 1981, 1983; Kiefer, 1983; Yocom, 1987; Hancock, 1993b; Smith, 1991). Rhodes & Shanklin (1993) noted that "Retellings can be considerably different, even for the same reader and text, depending on the situation in which the retelling is done" (p. 232). However, Wolf (1993) explained that the impact of context on assessment is often not considered and proposed various reasons for this including the difficulty of assessing the complex and interactive features of context.

The nature of the informal assessment task, including teachers' approaches, has been noted to determine reading performance (Wolf, 1993). Whether or not reading had been assigned, teachers' selection of books around a theme (Purves, 1975), and access to texts during assessment (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Wiggins, 1989) have been found to shape assessment results. Other teaching approaches including redirecting, refocusing, extending thinking and encouraging risk taking have been noted to contribute to children's ability to respond to literature (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Five, 1986; Hancock, 1992, 1993b; Kiefer, 1983). The mode of presentation has also been noted to affect responses. Children have been found to retell literal details of texts when responding orally and engage in deeper thought and reflection when responding in writing (Graves, 1983; Atwell, 1987). Barone (1990) and Five (1986) reported differences in responses according to whether children respond during or after reading, and the extent of student involvement. Five (1998) reported, for example, that Grade 5 children read with greater depth when they selected their own books and Hickman (1981) noted that children gave more comprehensive literal responses when stories were read by children as compared with teacher reading of texts.

Retellings and responses also appear to be influenced by whether they are individually or collaboratively undertaken. While some research has found individual responses richer than group responses, Barone (1990) and Kiefer (1983) reported that Grade 1 and 2 children's responses were richer following opportunities to interact and share their written responses. Farr et al. (1990) also reported better retellings by Kindergarten and Grade l children who listened to stories in small or large groups with group interaction as compared with children who heard stories as a whole class with no group interaction.

Children's understanding of the assessment task has also been noted to affect reading performance. Harste and Burke (1979) reported, for example, that retellings were influenced by children's perceptions of retellings as an authentic activity. Bunbury (1985) found that children's familiarity with responding affected their literature responses.

Types of Informal Teacher-Based Assessment

Literature Responses

Literature responses contain the reactions, perceptions, interpretations, value judgements, wonderings and speculations children make in response to a piece of literature (Odel & Cooper, 1976; Flitterman & King, 1988). Literature responses are frequently used as an informative type of informal assessment (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1992; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Wolf, 1989; Hiebert, 1991; Kelly, 1990; Barone, 1990).

Information that literature responses provide. Literature responses reveal personal meaning-making processes and strategies children use while reading and responding including how readers comprehend texts as well as what they comprehend or understand from texts (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Hancock, 1992). Responses enable teachers to observe not only children's comprehension of texts but how and why it changes (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Literature responses indicate the nature and extent to which children utilize text information as well as their personal experiences and knowledge (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989).

In addition, literature responses provide information regarding cognitive developmental stages or levels of thinking (Applebee, 1978; Pils, 1992; Appleyard, 1990; Bunbury, 1985; Piaget, 1960; Hickman, 1981; Galda, 1980). From the perspective of Piaget's stages of cognitive development, children functioning at the Pre-Operational and Concrete Operations Levels give literal responses and often retell the entire story (Bunbury, 1985). Children at the Concrete Operations Stage can also manipulate and expand an aspect of text. Children at the Formal Operations Stage are capable of giving a broader and more indepth analysis of style and inferential responses, relying on textual details but also taking an aesthetic or spectator stance (Kelly, 1990; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). In addition to information regarding cognitive development, response journals also indicate the extent of children's interest and enjoyment in reading (Kelly, 1990; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Afflerbach, & Kapinus, 1993).

A pattern of increased understanding and involvement has been noted across the grades (Protherough, 1983). Bunbury (1985) reported, for example, that Grade l children's responses were at a very literal level characteristic of Pre-Operational and Concrete Levels whereas Grade 2 to 5 children required less concrete text and support and could express a theme in terms that went beyond the text, assume a spectator stance and make moral judgments using their own experiences of the world. Grade 4 children were described as increasingly able to evaluate texts (Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). Purves (1975) reported that Grade 4 and 5 children gave more elaborations of reasons, evaluations, personal reactions and involvement through comparing themselves with the characters. Older children have also been noted to make a clearer distinction between liking and judging texts (Applebee, 1978).

Other researchers emphasize the necessity of viewing children's response development as progressive and cumulative rather than linear and hierarchically arranged (Clay, 1991; Thomson, 1987; Purves & Rippere, 1968; Sutherland, 1991). According to Thomson (1987), "as a reader progresses from one level to the next, she/he develops those [old] strategies for increasingly complex purposes, as well as adopting new strategies" (p. 178). Hickman (1981) reported that seven categories of response events were expressed by Kindergarten to Grade 5 children although the frequency, intensity and importance varied.

How children respond to literature. Primary children have been found to respond in numerous ways to texts, with overlap between the various types of responses. Their responses usually involve retelling literal aspects of texts. These types of responses have been described as factual sequential retellings and as being text centred with little distinction between text and response (Purves, 1975; Applebee, 1978; Hancock, 1993a). No emotional reaction or interpretation is generally involved and these responses have been described as at a lower level than interpretation or evaluation of text (Sutherland, 1991; Squire, 1987). Kiefer (1983) noted that Grade 1 and 2 children simply exchanged information when responding and Hickman (1981) described Kindergarten to Grade 5 children's responses as oral retellings. Kelly (1990) referred to Grade 3 children's initial oral responses as simple descriptive statements about one incident in the text. When not responding by recalling the entire text, primary children sometimes recall parts of texts. Applebee (1978) noted, for example, that children at the Concrete Operations Level responded to texts by describing characters and plot. Bunbury (1985) reported that primary children responded to the characters by giving detailed observations about them and that Grade l and 2 children responded to the details of the story.

Primary children's responses often go beyond literal comprehension as they give emotional or subjective reader-centred reactions to texts. Strong personal responses and involvement in reading have been described as the most important response information upon which to build literary evaluative and interpretive responses as well as independence in reading strategies (Hiebert, 1991; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Sutherland, 1991). Wollman-Bonilla (1991) further notes that, "Without engagement, mastery of the reading process and knowledge of literature are empty skills and information, and children are unlikely to read beyond school assignments" (p. 62).

Primary children have been noted to make personal connections with texts by comparing text events and characters with their personal, real life and world experiences (Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Yocom, 1987; Kelly, 1990; Barone, 1990). They express feelings and personal viewpoints regarding characters, events and actions often extending the story beyond the actual text (Barone, 1990; Bunbury, 1985; Kelly, 1990). Bunbury (1985) found that Grade l and 2 children evaluated and empathized with the characters. They also judged characters' conduct and noted how they would have behaved if they were the characters (Barone, 1990; Yocom, 1987; Bunbury, 1985). Cox and Many (1992) described three characteristics of children's aesthetic responses. Children were noted to imagine and picture the story as they read. For example, they imagined what it would be like to be the characters. They extended the story beyond the actual text. They hypothesized, for example, regarding how the story could have been different. Cox and Many also noted that children responded aesthetically by relating feelings, associations and personal experiences to the text. Hancock (1993) reported that Grade 6 children projected introspective insights into the feelings, thoughts and motives of characters' behavior. They identified with the characters, assessed characters' actions and values against their personal standards and expressed satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the unfolding events. Langer (1989) noted that middle and high school students used text information to "step into" the envisionment of the text. They used their previously constructed envisionments, prior knowledge and the text to gain deeper understanding of, for example, characters, situations, motives, feelings and actions.

Another indicator of primary children's engagement with texts has been described as their frequent questions related to understanding texts (Kiefer, 1983; Langer, 1989; Barone, 1990). Primary children's responses have sometimes been described as literary linkages as they connected new books with other books they had read by the same or different authors (Yocum, 1987; Kiefer, 1983). They were also found to engage in reader/writer digressions or thoughts outside the context of the text (Hancock, 1993). For example, they were noted to reflect on their reading processes and how they learned to read (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Five, 1986; Thomson, 1987).

Primary children's responses have been found to consist of inferences regarding stories (Kiefer, 1983; Bunbury, 1985). Sutherland (1991) reported that children infer the nature of characters, characters' problems, happenings and setting. Iser (1978) described children as filling the 'telling' gaps in incomplete or unclear texts. Hancock (1993) reported that Grade 6 children speculate or predict emerging text. Primary children have been noted to respond to the illustrations and details of the pictures sometimes giving a factual account of what they see in the illustrations. They were reported to gradually combine factual observations with their own inferences about what was happening in the story (Jett-Simpson, 1976; Kiefer, 1983; Sutherland, 1991; Yocom, 1987).

Sometimes primary children's responses have been described as consisting of literary judgments regarding the subject or plot, characterization, text language, writer's style and illustrations (Sutherland, 1991; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991). Some Grade 3 children, for example, were noted to go beyond literal retelling of events and observe the author's style (Kelly, 1990). Kiefer (1983) found that Grade l and 2 children often mentioned the title, dedication pages and artist's techniques when responding to picture books. Hancock (1993) reported that Grade 6 children evaluated literary techniques including writing style and the author's ability to maintain the reader's interest. Langer (1989) also noted that older readers distance themselves from their final envisionments of the text world and reflect on or react to their understanding of the content, text or their reading experiences.

Retellings

Oral and written retellings or free recalls are frequently used to assess reading (Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Y. Goodman et al., 1987). Retelling is the process of recalling a text orally or in written form after reading or hearing it (Smith & Keister, 1996). Johnston (1983) and Irwin and Mitchell (1983) describe retellings as containing characteristics of ideal assessment, being the most straightforward form of informal assessment. However, retellings have also been described as time-consuming and difficult for children at all ages, particularly kindergartners (Morrow, 1982). In addition, Y. Goodman et al. (1987) and Y. Goodman (1992b) note that because retellings can only measure what readers choose to retell, they often do not indicate readers' total understandings of texts.

Retellings provide information regarding primary children's awareness and understanding of story structure (Smith & Keister, 1996). Kalmback (1986) notes that "The real evidence of reading comprehension in a retelling lies not so much in what is recalled but how it is recalled" (p. 23). Farr et al. (1990) found that third graders' retellings showed story development or use of introduction/beginning, middle and ending. Retellings indicate children's ability to use the organization or unity of the story by recalling events in accurate, coherent, clear and logical order (Seltzer, 1989; Morrow, 1988; Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Farr & Lowe, 1994).

Children's awareness of appropriate story introduction through inclusion of statements regarding time or place, characters and their development is demonstrated in retellings (Anderson, 1993; Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Morrow, 1989b; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Anthony et al., 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Smith & Keister, 1996). Researchers have also documented primary children's understanding of the middles of texts through inclusion of the main character's primary goal, problem or conflict, relevant plot episodes, events, relationships and themes (Morrow, 1988;

Anthony et al., 1991). Evidence is also available in retellings of awareness of story ending or how the problem is resolved, goal attained, or story concluded (Anderson, 1985; Morrow, 1988).

In addition to story structure, retellings have also been found to indicate awareness of expository text structure (McGee & Richgels, 1985). Retellings can be examined to determine the extent to which children include major concepts, supporting details and clear or complete ideas (Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, 1990c).

Retellings have also been described as one of the best ways to assess comprehension or reconstruction of the meaning of texts heard or read (Anthony et al., 1991; Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993; Morrow, 1988; Y. Goodman, 1992b; Anderson, 1993; Smith & Keister, 1996; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Being open-ended and requiring readers to produce an answer, retellings provide more information about children's comprehension than the usual comprehension questions (Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Paris & Ayres, 1994; Hiebert, 1991). Retellings assess children's ability to comprehend literally or recall textually explicit information including theme, sequence, facts, happenings, details and cause-effect relationships (Tierney et al., 1979; Morrow, 1989b; Graham, 1994; Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Farr & Lowe, 1994). Ability to summarize, paraphrase and recount the gist of a story event is also assessed in retellings (Farr et al., 1990; Pellegrini & Galda, 1982). In addition, retellings assess children's ability to interpret what they read or recall textually implicit information through organizing, integrating and classifying information implied in the story, generalizing, and grasping the underlying theme (Morrow, 1988; Anthony et al., 1991). Retellings can be analyzed to determine the extent to which readers rely on text-based or reader-based information (Smith & Keister, 1996; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993). Retellings also assess critical thinking as children select a piece of literature, judge its worth and choose the best techniques to retell the story (Morrow, 1988; Farr et al., 1990).

Retellings assess children's processes for constructing their own meaning and knowledge (Sheppard, 1989; Seltzer, 1989; Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993; Morrow, 1988; Anthony et al., 1991). They provide information regarding children's ability to predict, infer, hypothesize, generalize, reconceptualize information and integrate interpretations of the author's meaning into their own reality (Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Bembridge, 1992; Smith & Keister, 1996).

Retellings also demonstrate children's ability to use illustrations or picture clues when reading (Morrow, 1988; Farr et al., 1990). Anthony et al. (1991) noted that primary children demonstrate utilization of stylistic devices of texts in their retellings, the form of their retellings changing with age (Montague, Maddux & Dereshiwsky 1990).

Primary children's utilization of language is also reflected in their retellings (Anthony et al., 1991; Smith & Keister, 1996). Retellings indicate the quality and complexity of children's oral and written language including fluency, vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, conventions and mechanics (Bintz & Harste, 1990; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Irwin & Mitchell, 1983; Morrow, 1985; Koskinen et al., 1988). In addition, retellings provide information regarding the extent to which children use book language or their own words that retain meaning (Morrow, 1988; Smith & Keister, 1996).

The length of children's retellings have been found to vary with age (Cullinan et al., 1983; Montague et al., 1990; Gambrell et al., 1985; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Anderson, 1985). Applebee (1978) reported, for example, that younger children's retellings often consist of a short string of unrelated events whereas older children's retellings are longer. In contrast, Y. Goodman (1992b) noted that younger children often retell a lot of information while older readers provide a plot statement with little explication unless asked to expand.

Running Records and Miscue Analysis

Miscue analysis and running records have been widely advocated and frequently used to assess oral reading (Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; Johns & Van Liersburg, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991; K. Goodman, 1992a; Hiebert, 1991). Differences exist between miscue analysis and running records. While the means of assessment of miscue analysis have been noted to differ from their means of instruction, running records have been described as occurring during everyday classroom instruction. Running records consider the social context, allow reading of familiar texts and more closely describe how children read in normal instructional situations (Anthony et al., 1991). Meyer (1992) maintains that a complete miscue analysis is only necessary for children the teacher is concerned about.

In the Reading Recovery Program, running records serve the same purpose as miscue analysis, both providing indepth information regarding readers' understanding and integration of the language cuing systems and strategies to construct meaning (Rasinski, 1995; Hiebert, 1991; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Harp, 1991; K. Goodman, 1973). Barnes (1996) and Browne, Fitts, McLaughlin, McNamara and Williams (1996, 1997) note that running records provide information about how children process text or the extent to which they use effective literacy strategies including searching for information, monitoring, noticing mismatches, confirming and disconfirming.

Analysis of miscues and running records provides information regarding primary children's use of grapho-phonic cues. Clay (1969) reported that 41% of 5 year old readers' miscues were graphophonically similar to text. Boettcher (1977), Rhodes (1979) and Au (1977) also found that the graphophonic cuing systems was the most frequently used system by Grade l and 2 children. Running records and miscue analysis provide information regarding the location of graphophonic cues. Weber (1968) concluded that the first letter or letters were most frequently used to identify words and Smith (1977) reported that the first letter of most words was sufficient for cuing readers of first-grade materials. Weber (1970b, 1968) noted that 33% of Grade l children's substitutions shared the last letter, that 14% of substitutions shared the last two letters and that middles of words were least frequently attended to.

Oral reading also provides information about children's utilization of phonic cues. Goodman and Goodman (1977) noted that phonemic miscues occurred less frequently than graphic miscues and Strong (1985) reported that Grade 2 and 3 children relied on decoding the first letters of words.

In addition, running records and miscue analysis indicate children's proficiency with contextual cues. Researchers have found that most readers regardless of age or proficiency give a greater number of contextually acceptable miscues than graphophonically similar miscues (Lipson & Wixson, 1991; Biemiller, 1970; K. Goodman and Burke, 1970). Clay (1969) noted that 72% of 5-year-old readers' miscues were grammatically acceptable. Beginning and less able readers who have not learned to use graphic or decoding information automatically have been noted to over-rely on their knowledge of grammatical structure as a compensatory measure (Stanovich, 1991; Juel, 1991; Leu, DeGroff & Simmons, 1986 and Goldsmith-Phillips, 1989). Some researchers maintain that as readers mature, the proportion of syntactically acceptable miscues increases (Au, 1977; K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977; Leslie, 1980). Strong (1985) also found that the role of contextual cues became more important during late primary years. However, Allington and Strange (1987), Cohen (1974/1975), Juel (1980), Stanovich (1980) and Weber (1970a) reported that proficient readers use equal or less contextual information compared to less proficient readers.

In addition to syntactic cues, oral reading indicates children's utilization of the semantic cuing system. Clay (1969) found that most miscues of beginning readers up to Grade 2 were semantically acceptable. Rhodes (1979) reported Grade l children's semantic cue utilization to range from 25% to 53% whereas Biemiller (1970) described Grade l children as frequently using semantic miscues. K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1977) and Wixson (1979) noted that average or more proficient readers made more semantic acceptable miscues. In addition, researchers have found that most readers' miscues were more syntactically than semantically acceptable (Burke & Goodman, 1970; K. Goodman & Burke, 1969; K. Goodman, 1975).

In addition to information regarding children's utilization of the semantic cuing system, oral reading indicates the extent to which the author's meaning is maintained. Sampson et al. (1981) found that while children's basal story miscues were semantically and syntactically acceptable they often resulted in meaning change. Less proficient readers have been noted to make more meaning change errors or miscues that changed the author's meaning (K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977; Chinn et al., 1993).

Researchers also indicate that oral reading provides information regarding children's personal or world knowledge and how they use this knowledge as they read (Harp, 1991; K. Goodman, 1973; Browne et al., 1996/1997). Running records and miscue analysis provide information regarding children's knowledge or familiarity with the topic and concepts, the extent to which they can relate texts to their own experiences and their familiarity with texts and text language. Denner, McGinley and Brown (1988) reported that Grade 3 children with high prior knowledge of the story topic made fewer miscues that resulted in meaning loss than students with low prior background knowledge. Kelly, Klein and Neal (1993) noted that at-risk emergent Grade l readers used their familiarity with language structure when learning how to read.

Oral reading has also been found to provide information about children's utilization of picture cues. Researchers have noted that the use of extralinguistic cues, e.g., cues external to the reader including pictures, graphs and charts, decreases with grade level. Englander and Harste (1979) found that kindergarten children, for example, tended to use extralinguistic cues more often than Grade l and 2 children and more often than linguistic or cognitive cues.

Running records and miscue analysis provide an indication of both the extent and nature of children's self-corrections. Proficient readers have been described as self-correcting more unacceptable miscues than poor readers (Lipson & Wixson, 1991; Au, 1977; Beebe, 1980; D'Angelo, 1981; Weber, 1970b and Clay, 1969). However, Christie and Alonso (1980) reported no significant difference in self-correcting between Grade 1 and Grade 3. Adkins & Niles (1985) and D'Angelo (1981) also found no significant difference in percentage of self-corrections across grades.

Other Informal Assessment Techniques

Teachers often engage in questioning, interviewing and conferencing (Y. Goodman, 1991; Hiebert, 1991). Cazden (1988) describes questioning as the most frequent type of classroom interaction. Durkin (1978/1979) and Hiebert (1991) note that questioning allows more efficient use of time than interviewing. Questioning, interviewing and conferencing provide information regarding higher level learning and thinking processes (Hiebert, 1991). Through probing, information can be obtained about cuing systems, metacognitive awareness, use of prior knowledge to comprehend, reading interests, and attitudes towards reading, its role and functions (Hiebert, 1991; Green, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; K. Goodman et al., 1989; Paris & Ayres, 1994).

Checklists are a frequent form of informal assessment (Hiebert, 1991). However, the usefulness of checklists has been questioned as they have been found to interfere with discussions and more comprehensive observations (Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993; K. Goodman, 1992b).

Another type of informal assessment is reading logs. In addition to the frequency of use of books, reading logs provide information regarding the scope of children's reading including the range of topics they are reading about. Dialogue and learning journals allow children to engage in one-to-one conversation with peers and teachers regarding understandings and significant experiences in their lives. Journals also indicate how children learn and their ability to make connections (Y. Goodman, 1992a; Paris & Ayres, 1994).

Summary

In recent years, largely because of dis-satisfaction with approaches to reading assessment which have not kept pace with recent advances in reading research, theory and practices, there has been a movement toward greater utilization of informal teacher-based assessment of children. Teacher-based assessment involves collecting, storing, reflecting and interpreting the meaning of student information collected from everyday, uncontrived, naturally occurring instructional interactions.

Informal assessment supports dynamic and holistic concepts of reading development and recognizes the personal and social nature of this development. It has both a product and process focus and is adaptable to the specific purpose(s) of the assessment task.

Informal teacher-based assessment has the potential to improve both students' and teachers' learning. It has been reported to contribute to students' improved facility with oral and written language, comprehension and transactions between the reader and text. By encouraging the continuous collaborative reflection of teachers on the effectiveness of their teaching, informal assessment can lead to more ownership for effective teaching practices, increased confidence in observations and judgments about student growth and development and more articulated and verbalizable belief systems.

Informal teacher-based assessment is influenced by many reader, text and situational factors. Children's knowledge of literature, vocabulary and previous experiences with texts and authors, their facility with oral and written language, knowledge of language conventions, strategies and interactions of cuing systems, and their sociocultural background, cognitive ability, age and personal and affective factors have been found to contribute to reading performance. Appropriate text have been described as challenging, conceptually appropriate, consistent with the goals of the curriculum and children's background and knowledge and encourage emotional identification. The quality of text language, structural characteristics of texts and additional cuing systems within texts including pictures, captions, charts and graphs have been reported to affect informal reading assessment performance. Instructional methods as well as children's understanding of and familiarity with the assessment task have also been noted to affect reading performance.

Literature responses, oral and written retellings and oral reading are frequently used as informative types of teacher-based assessment strategies. Literature responses reveal personal meaning-making processes and strategies children use while reading including the nature and extent to which they utilize text information, personal experiences and knowledge. Literature responses also provide information regarding cognitive developmental stages or levels of thinking and the extent of children's interest and enjoyment in reading. Retellings provide information regarding primary children's awareness and understanding of story structure or development as well as expository text structure. They indicate the extent to which readers rely on explicit text-based or reader-based information as well as critical thinking. Running records and miscue analysis provide indepth information regarding readers' understanding, utilization and integration of the language cuing systems and strategies to construct meaning and process text. Other frequently used informal assessment tasks include questioning, interviewing, conferencing, reading logs and dialogue and learning journals.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Research Design

It was important that the research design for this study recognize the role of teachers as researchers in classroom research (Pinnell & Matlin, 1989). As well, it needed to foster a reflective process allowing the teachers and I to relate new findings and ideas to our own models of language and knowledge of reading development (Erickson, 1987). Throughout the research, the teachers and I collected primary children's reading samples in the context of classrooms and were involved in a process of collaborative reflective interpretation of the samples. K. Goodman (1989) has noted that whole language draws on ethnographic, descriptive and collaborative research. This study combined all three forms of research. One particular form of collaborative research which was evident throughout the study was action research. Essential steps of this process of systematic inquiry which teachers and I were engaged in included planning, action, observation and monitoring of implementation, reflection and revision (Deshler & Ewert, 1995; Elliott, 1991; Carr & Kemmis, 1986). We negotiated meaning (Gabel, 1995), learned from changes to assessment strategies used (Kemmis, 1993) and created new knowledge by changing our ideas and practices. Teachers and I were engaged as active participants and partners in this research learning process (Russell & Munby, 1993). We implemented the assessment strategies, analyzed the data collectively and monitored and reflected critically upon the appropriateness and effectiveness of the selected informal reading assessment strategies and children's performance on the strategies (Riding, Fowell & Levy, 1995; Ebbutt as cited by Hopkins, 1985; Deshler & Ewert, 1995). Reflection led to changes in understanding of assessment and assessment strategies, in analysis of reading samples and in teaching practices (Riding, Fowell & Levy, 1995). Through a critical collaborative process, we changed each other's knowledge regarding the quality of assessment practices and the benefits of informal assessment strategies (Kemmis, 1993; Prendergast, 1994). Through reflection and self-assessment, teachers became empowered and increased their ownership of the assessment process (Schon, 1983; Zuber-Skerritt, 1982). In addition to qualitative techniques, there was quantitative tallying of frequencies of teachers' comments.

Gaining Entry

In April, I wrote the superintendents of two large school boards in Newfoundland, requesting permission to involve five primary teachers, including one special education teacher, and 25 students from each board in a research project. The nature and purposes of the research were outlined.

Upon receipt of approval in May, I met with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction of each school board and asked for their help in selecting language arts teachers who were well informed in the nature of reading development, familiar with using portfolios and believed that studying the nature of children's reading was an important endeavor. Each assistant superintendent met with the language arts coordinator for the board and together they "went through" their registry of Kindergarten to Grade 3 and primary special education teachers in each school in their district searching for teachers who met these criteria. Teachers selected were those who had served on language arts and evaluation committees, projects and study groups at the school and district levels. Several of them had helped deliver district professional development.

I then telephoned school principals of the 10 teachers and explained the study and obtained their consent. Following this, I met with each individual teacher, explained the research and outlined the commitment required. Teachers gave written consent to participate in the study and indicated that they would prefer to explain the study to the children's parents. In September, each teacher identified five students for the study, explained the study to the children's parents and obtained their written consent for the children to be involved in the study.

Participants

Ten primary teachers, two at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 3 and two special education teachers were involved in the study. All teachers were experienced primary teachers, with 13 to 28 years teaching experience at the primary and elementary levels, six of the teachers having taught primary and elementary children for 26 to 28 years. In addition, seven of the teachers held Grade 5 or 6 teacher certification which required two Bachelor's degrees. Three teachers had obtained Masters' degrees in the areas of Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration or Teaching.

Information was collected on a total of 50 students or 10 students at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 3 and special education. Both regular and special education students were included in the study in order to ensure that a range of reading development was examined. Classroom teachers selected above average, average and below average readers. The 10 special education students were classified as learning disabled, slow learners or as having academic learning difficulties. Students receiving support from English Second Language teachers as well as students with sensory deficits and from low incidence exceptionalities were not included in this study.

Teachers were viewed as full participants and as collaborators in this study. In addition to collecting and analyzing reading samples, teachers described and clarified the contexts in which the assessment information was collected as well as the nature of the learners and the texts.

It was agreed that students' names would be kept confidential. Although some teachers did not seem concerned as to whether or not their names were used, I used pseudonyms for them as well.

Data Collection

Data were collected from September to June of one school year. Teachers collected reading samples and I collected their comments during group as well as individual meetings. Group discussions provided opportunities for the articulation of beliefs regarding assessment as well as descriptions of reading. In addition, teachers often commented briefly about children in the research or about assessment issues while I was dropping off or picking up books or reading folders. Anecdotal notes of these conversations were recorded. I also kept a journal of my thoughts and queries throughout the research.

Reading Samples

Through a majority agreement process, teachers selected informal assessment techniques which they believed demonstrated certain characteristics. The informal assessment techniques used in this study were believed to be consistent with the principles of whole language and reflect a theoretical conception of reading as involving dynamic, reconstructive and meaning making processes. Assessment techniques used to collect samples of children's reading were those considered by teachers as natural to classroom settings and teachers' approaches, appropriate for groups or individuals, and helpful in providing a whole picture of the child. The samples chosen provided information regarding readers' prior knowledge, their attitudes towards reading and the nature of their reading in varied texts and contexts. Informal assessment techniques chosen for the study involved running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses. Teachers usually collected samples of children's running records by taking the child aside and listening to the child read while the rest of the class engaged in silent or paired reading or reading conferences. Oral retellings were analyzed as well as written retellings and written literature responses which all children recorded in their exercise books. Oral and written retellings were collected following independent and teacher reading of texts. Children usually responded to texts read by teacher although Grade 3 children responded to texts read by teacher and also independently read texts. With the exception of Grade 3, literature used for all assessment tasks was that which was available to teachers and included children's literature, basals and passages from workbooks. In addition to collecting informal samples of children's reading, teachers analyzed the samples and recorded their comments.

Teachers' Comments

Teachers' comments were collected in two stages consisting of three half day (2 ½ hours) group meetings for Stage 1 and three half day (3 hours) group meetings for Stage 2, with additional individual meetings with teachers scheduled as needed. Teachers were provided with substitutes in order to attend the group meetings. The first group meeting was scheduled for April 27 but was postponed until June 1 because of a teachers' strike. Group meetings resumed in early October, the last meeting held in late February. Individual meetings of one to two hours each were held at times convenient for teachers, e.g., during teachers' preparation periods, after school and on Saturdays. Meetings were held in classrooms or in teachers' homes.

Stage 1

At the initial meeting, I reviewed the purposes of our research and explained that I would organize teachers' comments and complete an analysis of the assessments as well. I emphasized that although there were specific research questions which needed to be answered, I wanted to hear teachers' suggestions as to viable ways to answer these questions. I assured teachers that I would be willing to make adjustments to meet their needs throughout the research.

The purpose of the first three group meetings, which were scheduled for 2 ½ hours each on June 1, October 12 and November 9, was to obtain information from teachers regarding informal assessment techniques they were using and felt they should be using. The teachers also agreed upon assessment techniques they would use in the study to collect samples of children's reading behavior. During these three meetings in Stage 1, we discussed the following question which reflected one of the purposes of the study:

- What informal assessment techniques are currently used by primary teachers to assess reading in Newfoundland and what assessment procedures do primary teachers think they should be using?

We began by listing characteristics that we thought all recommended informal reading assessment techniques should have. We discussed the advantages, limitations and extent to which various assessment techniques contain the necessary characteristics.

During the three group meetings at this Stage, we gradually reached a majority agreement regarding which informal assessment techniques would be included in all children's reading files or portfolios for analysis in the study. Through majority agreement by 6 of 10 teachers, it was agreed that running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses would be collected on each child in the study.

In addition, during Stage l group meetings, teachers wanted to discuss other assessment issues including their past experiences in collecting reading samples, their emerging realizations about informal assessment and specific assessment techniques as well as their current school and district assessment procedures. After the second group meeting, most teachers began collecting the required samples and this continued throughout the remainder of the project.

Stage 2

In Stage 2, three group meetings of three hours each were held on December 7, January 24 and February 25. Numerous individual meetings were also held. The major purpose of group and individual meetings at this stage was to analyze reading samples although teachers continued to comment on assessment techniques and evolving criteria for analyzing children's reading samples. The following questions which reflected the purposes of the study were dealt with at this stage:

- How do primary teachers analyze information obtained from the informal assessment?
- What is the degree of consistency between teachers' informal analyses and my analysis of the same information?

Group meetings. During the group meetings, teachers shared the reading samples of one of their five students chosen for the research. Three children's reading samples were discussed at the December 3 meeting, three during the January meeting and four samples at the last meeting. One child's reading samples at a time were distributed to small groups of teachers who studied, discussed, reflected upon and recorded comments about the student's reading performance. Teachers then listened to the classroom teacher sharing her comments, shared their observations in the large group, asked questions and sought clarification from the child's teacher.

Because teachers had recorded few written comments, often keeping their comments and criteria "in their heads" as an ongoing everyday part of teaching, and because interpreting children's reading samples was a new experience for most teachers in the study, they needed additional time at meetings to record their observations of their child's assessment samples. Teachers recorded what they had kept in their heads about what they thought their children were doing or not doing when reading.

When sharing their anecdotal comments for each individual student, there were not many differences of opinion among teachers; rather comments were usually clarified and supplemented with additional information. While the majority of group meeting time was spent discussing individual students' reading samples, commonalities and differences in performance on similar assessment techniques within a grade and across grades were sometimes noted.

We decided that in addition to discussing individual students' reading samples during Stage 2 meetings, we would continue to discuss essential characteristics and types of informal reading samples which would allow teachers more time to reflect on the assessment techniques as they used them. I used several tape recorders to record large and small group meetings during both Stages l and 2 and transcribed pertinent sections of group discussions including decisions regarding required assessment techniques to be used in the study.

Individual meetings. Although group meetings provided teachers with a model of "what to do," they preferred individual meetings and an opportunity to study the samples independently at school or home. They stated that they needed more time to think and felt rushed during the group meetings and influenced by other teachers' comments. It was agreed that in addition to collecting and recording comments on five children in their own classrooms, each teacher would describe the reading samples of three other children from one or several grades. I agreed to meet with them individually to discuss their remaining students as well as the additional three children from another grade(s).

Approximately seven individual meetings (l to 2 hours) were held with each teacher where one child's samples were discussed at each meeting. These meetings were spaced across the school year beginning in October and ending in June. Throughout these meetings, teachers also provided additional information about assessment techniques they were using and assessment techniques they thought they should be using. Several teachers were more inclined to contribute during the individual meetings, some teachers saying that they were reluctant to mention certain assessment tasks because they were not sure "what I was looking for." I continually reassured teachers that I wanted to hear about assessment techniques they were actually using and about techniques and criteria which they thought they should be using.

All individual meetings were audiotaped and transcribed. Information about additional assessment techniques and essential characteristics of informal reading samples collected in the individual meetings was circulated to the teachers in the study to determine the appropriateness of the characteristics as well as whether these assessment techniques should be used by everyone. In addition, each teacher's descriptions of a child's reading were verified by the teacher and then circulated in the child's folder to another teacher.

Researcher's Role

Throughout our group and individual meetings, I tried to foster an environment where teachers would feel comfortable sharing information about assessment techniques they were using or ones they thought they should be using as well as opinions about specific children's reading samples. I emphasized that I was a learner too, that they knew the children best and had extensive experience with children.

Throughout the study, my role was that of an active participant (Spradley, 1980). I facilitated discussions among teachers at group meetings and collaborated with teachers by circulating during small group discussions, listening, making jot notes, clarifying the task and reflecting with them upon the reading samples. I also independently analyzed the samples.

I generally spent individual meeting times scribing or jot noting teachers' in-head analyses. Sometimes teachers would have recorded their comments but they still wanted to discuss and clarify them with me. Occasionally teachers chose to write additional comments throughout the individual meetings.

I assisted some teachers in collecting additional information by working with children not in the study so teachers could collect samples, e.g., I conferenced with children as they read in groups allowing the teachers more time to focus on recording miscues. I demonstrated for teachers how to record miscues and do running records by working with children in the study.

I provided additional information for teachers who were unfamiliar with some of the assessment techniques mentioned by other teachers. Some teachers indicated, for example, that they had been listening to children reading orally but had not recorded the miscues. I mentioned a video, Running Records, that could perhaps help and teachers decided that they all would like to view it. Teachers also requested readings and information about teachers as researchers, informal assessment, ways to assess author's chair and response journals as well as children's attitudes towards reading. I distributed "Hard Questions about Teacher Research" (Isakson and Boody, 1993), The Whole Language Catalog Supplement on Authentic Assessment by K. Goodman et al. (1992), Grand Conversations (Peterson and Eeds, 1990), interest surveys, In the Middle (Atwell, 1987) and the provincial document Reading and Writing Difficulties: An Educator's Handbook (1990). In addition we watched and discussed the assessment sections of Jerome Harste's video, Creating Classrooms for Authors. I borrowed story books which teachers requested and which were unavailable from their school libraries. In order to analyze children's reading samples and compare teachers' analysis with my analysis, I also needed to become familiar with a variety of print material.

I reminded teachers of meeting times and places and provided nutrition breaks. I also photocopied reading samples as well as comments that I had scribed or which teachers had written and shared them among teachers for feedback.

As in any collaborative study, each of the participants contributed in different ways at different times across the duration of the study. For example, at times I assumed the role of facilitator when teachers felt they had insufficient knowledge to carry out the study. At other times I was one of the participants in the discussion. Similarly, the teachers' contribution changed and shifted throughout the study relative to how confident they felt with the task being completed.

Analysis of the Data

Analysis of Teachers' Comments

Each teacher recorded comments on five of her own students and three additional children's running records, oral retellings, written retellings and literature response samples. I used Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) methodology (Spradley, 1980) as a systematic means to organize, combine and analyze teachers' comments at each grade level. Teachers' comments regarding self-corrected miscues in the running records were not analyzed because while teachers noted whether or not children self-corrected, they did not discuss the nature of the self-corrections. Results of analysis of reading samples of primary children on individualized program plans in language arts were integrated according to their homeroom placement.

DRS Analysis. Spradley's DRS methodology was used which included domain, taxonomic and componential analysis. While the following steps from Spradley's DRS methodology were followed, this sequence was not linear. For example, even while I wrote I was realizing additional possible combinations and was combining taxonomies.

Domain analysis was used as a way of organizing and examining teachers' comments regarding running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses at grade levels and across grades. The domain analysis gave me an overview of how the teachers described primary children's reading. I constructed mixed domains consisting mostly of teachers' own language as the cover terms and some analytic domains from inferring or generalizing teachers' tacit meanings. I chose teachers' most common descriptions and their more general statements or descriptors as cover terms. As

I searched for possible cover terms and included terms from teachers' comments, I kept asking teachers, "What do you think the child is doing in this running record, retelling, or literature response?" I searched for semantic relationships which they were directly or indirectly stating about children's reading. First, I organized teachers' comments for each child and then I combined similar comments within a domain about children at the same grade.

Teachers' descriptions of primary children's written literature responses were categorized into the domains of Kind/Type, Content, Personal, Appearance and Other. Their descriptions of running records included the domains of Graphic Cues, Phonic Cues, Contextual Cues, Author's Meaning and Other. Oral and written retellings included the domains of Story Structure, Text Focus, Beyond Text Focus, Comprehension, Other Factors and General Evaluative. It was difficult at times to keep the same type of comments in each domain as there was overlap across domains. For example, the child's experiences and background in the domain Other Factors: Nature of Child were related to the Beyond Text Focus domain.

I limited the scope of the study by focusing on the most frequently commented upon domains or cover terms. I explored how these organizing domains related to teachers' descriptions of reading for each specific assessment technique. I wanted to present an overall or surface understanding of teachers' descriptions of children's reading while at the same time focusing on aspects of reading most frequently described.

I made a taxonomic analysis by asking taxonomic or structural questions such as, "Which of these comments and domains regarding running records, oral and written retellings or written literature responses for a particular grade are similar?" However, the taxonomies were always tentative and changing as I searched for similarities within included terms and combined included terms for each domain, e.g., I combined "sounding out" and "phonics." I also looked for similarities among domains as I questioned whether any of the domains could be combined to form larger more inclusive domains. An example of two domains that were combined were the running records' domains of Text Difficulty and Text Language which were combined into the larger domain Nature of Text. I also searched for similarities and differences among grades as I asked, "How are Grade 1 children like Grade 2 children?" "Do teachers describe Grade 2 children's Personal Responses the same or differently from Grade 3 children and if so how?"

I identified subsets for each organizing domain by continuing to ask structural questions of each included term, e.g., "What are all the kinds of pictures and labels?" "Can any of these go together - are any of these similar?" For example, taxonomic analysis of primary children's written literature responses resulted in more specific subcategories of Pictures and Labels, Main Idea, Summary, Details, Personal and Appearance responses.

I made selected observations and did a componential analysis by looking for differences within domains. In order to further understand teachers' meaning of each major organizing domain, I explored if and how the categories inside each domain contrasted with one another. I asked, "Are there any differences among these comments? How are all these comments different? What other differences exist between these two included terms?" I went through my notes making more focused observations about teachers' comments to determine if indeed it was a significant difference.

When I made comparisons of similar domains across grades, I asked the contrast questions "Is there anything in Kindergarten that's not in Grade l, 2, 3? In what ways are running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses different across the grades?" e.g., "What's the same or different in the organizing domain of Main Idea for Kindergarten, Grade l, 2 and 3? Which of these comments and domains are different? How have teachers described Grade l children differently from Grade 3 children?" Finally common major organizing domains were chosen across grade levels. The final set of categories used to analyze teachers' comments are presented in Appendices A to D with examples for each subcategory.

Tabulating Results

Having organized teachers' comments according to Spradley's methodology, I then calculated the frequency of teachers' comments for the domains describing running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses. Tables reflecting the frequency of teachers' comments were developed for running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses and are included in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Teachers generally commented regarding the presence or absence of reading behaviors. Following the division of comments into categories, I calculated separately the total number of positive and negative comments and transferred each into a percentage. Sometimes it was difficult to determine if comments were positive or negative and I sometimes relied on teachers' wording to make this determination. For example, teachers' descriptions of retellings as "not identical to the text" were considered to be negative. Teachers' comments regarding assessment and specific assessment techniques were analyzed separately from their descriptions of children's reading.

Researcher's Analysis

Teachers' descriptions or comments of primary children's performance on running records, oral and written retellings and written literature responses were compared with my analysis of these reading samples. While teachers' descriptions reflected their interpretations of some of the children's reading behaviors, my analysis involved a consideration of each reading miscue, response statement and recall clause.

Running Records. Running records were analyzed using an adapted form of K. Goodman and Burke's (1970) miscue analysis. I did not analyze primary children's use of phonic cues. Instead, I analyzed children's use of graphic, contextual and author's meaning cues. Beebe (1981) found much overlap or a coefficient of .925 between Grade 4 children's utilization of graphic and phonic cues and concluded that readers use graphophonic relationships to assist them in decoding words rather than graphic or phonic cues separately. Self-corrections were not analyzed. For operational definitions of graphic similarity, contextual acceptability and meaning change, refer to Appendix E.

Oral and Written Retellings. Sentences were divided into clausal units and each clausal unit was counted once. Clausal units were analyzed according to Verbatim Recall/Paraphrasing, Combining, Generalizing, Inferencing, Elaborating and Erroneous Recall (Drum & Lantaff, 1977; Fagan, 1989). For operational definitions of these terms, refer to Appendix F. In addition, children's retellings were analyzed according to the amount or extent of recall of beginning, middle and ending parts of texts. Each text was divided into the story structure components of beginning, middle and ending and children's retellings were compared with the text. Refer to Appendix F for definitions and examples of my analysis of story structure.

Literature Responses. Children's responses to literature were organized or divided into response statements. A response statement was defined as "a focused thought addressing one aspect of text" (Hancock, 1993a, p. 341). Most response statements were one sentence in length but some response statements were more than one sentence. I developed a schema of common forms of response statements based on the literature. This schema was revised through application to children's response statements collected in this study. The major categories consisted of Descriptive Statements, Engagement/Involvement, Explanations, Literary Evaluation and Responses to Illustrations. I calculated the frequency of children's different response statements. For operational definitions of these categories, refer to Appendix G.

Each statement was counted only once. If the response consisted of a drawing, the drawing was counted as a response. I tried to minimize teacher effect. For example, if all Grade 1 children's literature responses to Little Brown Monkey began with "I liked," I did not consider these responses as Engagement/Involvement. Similarly, I did not count literature responses as Explanations which followed a teacher's request to, "Tell why this is your favorite book." Compound statements were counted as one response, e.g., the response *"Farmer Joe put on his coat and his jacket and his mitts and scarf,"* was counted as one response.

In addition to categorizing response statements, I tried to understand how children structured their entire response to each story. The importance of looking at children's responses in a holistic manner was necessitated when I realized that some children's response statements were really a combination of several of my criteria. Overlap was evident between categories, e.g., between Explanations and Story Involvement.

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Dependability and Confirmability

Every attempt was made to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Spradley's (1980) DRS methodology was followed in a systematic manner. Use of a systematic methodology increased the likelihood of more accurately reflecting teachers' perceptions of reading. I checked for inconsistencies within a teacher's comments, among teachers' comments, and between teachers' comments and my analysis. My analysis also helped strengthen the trustworthiness of teachers' comments. Although infrequent, I went back to teachers for clarification and further discussion when there were inconsistencies. Where discrepancies between teachers' comments and my analysis were found, I checked my coding and I talked to teachers to obtain clarification. Teachers suggested that when there were inconsistencies between teachers that I should "... go with the teacher who knows the child ... [or] go with the majority." To establish credibility of data, reading samples were collected in children's familiar classroom environments and teachers familiar with the children were involved in the analysis.

Classes at each grade level were only combined after commonalities between classes were found. For example, teachers gave similar descriptions for both Grade 2 classes' oral retellings (independently read), the extent to which children Go Beyond Text receiving the least positive comments. Furthermore, a comparison of miscue analysis of the two Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 classes indicated the same ranking regarding utilization of cueing systems with graphic cues much higher than contextual and meaning cues. Every attempt was made to ensure "... a clear trail from my data to my conclusions" (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a, p. 156).

Attempts were made to establish confirmability of results. Several teachers did not read other teachers' comments about a particular child's reading samples prior to writing or telling their own. Rachel noted for example that she "would prefer to make [her] own comments before looking at others' comments, if not they will sort of lead the way ... [and] I would be affected by other teachers' comments [and] may not really see what's there." In addition, interrater agreement was established for miscue analysis by comparing my analysis of 16 to 20 miscues at each grade level with my advisor's analysis of these miscues on graphophonic, contextual and meaning change. Children's names and texts read were randomly selected until approximately 20 miscues were selected for each grade. For example, in order to obtain the required sample of miscues, one child and one text were randomly selected for Grade 3 while three children and two different texts were selected for Grade 1. Interrater agreement of 94% was determined.

CHAPTER 4

Results and Discussion of Assessment Strategies

Introduction

In this chapter, results are presented on teachers' views of assessment, the informal strategies being used by teachers to assess reading at the commencement of the study and assessment strategies they thought they should be using. This information was collected in group meetings near the beginning of the study as well as in individual meetings. In addition, assessment strategies selected for the study are presented together with teachers' changing views of assessment across the study.

Teachers' Views on Assessment at the Beginning of the Study

Teachers described assessment as "an individual process" that considers the child's "developmental process" resulting in "different expectations for different children." They also explained that they would not use a particular assessment strategy if they knew the child had the necessary skills. "Running records [for example] would not be done if the child was doing well" or reading at a certain level. Children experiencing difficulties were assessed more frequently in order to "keep on top" of what they are doing. Texts used were usually those "that children should be able to read."

Teachers explained that while they record some comments and grades in their plan books and write comments to the child, they are "not good record keeper[s]." They generally analyze and keep their observations in their "minds" or "heads." The main reason given for not recording was because it was not a natural procedure. Assessment was described as "so much a part of every day ... daily instruction ... it's so natural that it's taken for granted." Teachers explained that because they are "working with the child on a daily basis, ... they can see development in reading ... can see a pattern forming" and therefore they do not need to record, for example, "if the child is omitting a lot of words." Reading was described as

> "such a gradual evolving process that you don't need to worry that you won't see the behavior the next day and so you don't feel the need to write it down ... it's in front of you ... It's like living with someone day to day - you know their ways."

In addition, teachers referred to assessment as a means to "reaffirm what you already know about the child," that "all the head things are coming true."

Another reason noted by some teachers for not recording was because they "didn't know what [they were] looking for" and lacked confidence and belief in their own judgments. Similarly, they explained that while their school districts' prior reporting procedure of anecdotal comments "made the teacher think about the child," they "did not know what to comment on." At the end of the study, Martha commented,

> "My comments wouldn't be that different now but now I feel I am reaffirmed that what I believe is ok ... my personal comments have a weight ... I trust my own judgment enough to write it down ... before I was looking for someone's else's gauge of what a good retelling, for example, is..."

Even at the beginning of the study, however, teachers indicated that they would write comments for "a child who was struggling" in reading and may "keep some samples back to be passed on to the next year's teacher..." They were also more inclined to record observations or make jot notes when unsure about the nature of the child's reading problem and how to help the child.

In addition to recording in their heads, teachers also indicated that they kept the criteria for each assessment task or the expectations in their heads and that verbalizing the criteria used to assess the reading samples was a new experience. Teachers explained that, "from our teaching experience, we know this is what a child in Grade 2 should be able to do - it's in our heads" and "... we tick them off in our heads."

Problems identified with their school districts' current reporting procedure of using letter grades included "... not forc[ing] the teacher to think about each individual child ..." and lacking a "place on the report card to describe the child and what he or she is doing in the classroom." Teachers described the current report card as "... set up so most children will get Bs and Cs because they ... can't give an A - that means perfect." To complete the present report card, teachers noted that they merely "pull marks out of [their] heads."

Desirable Characteristics of Strategies

Teachers indicated that they "were looking for something different" but felt that informal reading assessment should have certain essential characteristics which support their beliefs about whole language.

Assessment Should be Comprehensive and Meaningful

Teachers chose assessment strategies which they believed gave them the most information about children's reading. Teachers recognized that assessment should provide comprehensive information and describe the whole child including their interests, attitudes, background information, comprehension and reading strategies as well as specific information regarding children's strengths and needs. They were concerned about accountability and felt that these strategies should also help them better meet their responsibilities in this area by providing necessary concrete evidence or samples to support their evaluation. As Rachel noted, "You just can't say that a child is on a certain level. You need concrete evidence." Wollman-Bonilla (1991), Afflerbach and Kapinus (1993), and Lipson and Wixson (1991) also recommended comprehensive assessment consisting of a variety of strategies to assess a broad range of performance across multiple reading tasks, texts and settings.

Assessment Should be Part of Instruction

At the beginning of the study, teachers viewed assessment as a natural part of everyday classroom instruction. They mentioned that assessment tasks should represent the classroom activities that teachers provide children and be integrated with teachers' approaches. Assessment strategies chosen were those which teachers believed to be authentic classroom activities, that were "a natural consequence of teaching young children." Teachers felt it important that assessment strategies fit in with their classroom organization of individual, large and small grouping without disrupting the classroom. Kindergarten children, for example, often did oral retellings as a class. As Martha noted, "We didn't have time to do fancy little things ... to cater to Edith Furey, ... we wanted assessments that could be part of the curriculum and enabled us to get on with it." Because assessment strategies chosen reflected their teaching, teachers felt they could be used without requiring a lot of training.

Other educators also believe that assessment should represent what is being taught, that information should be gathered from naturally occurring classroom settings and that assessment should not be separate from instruction (Turbill, 1994; Anthony, Johnson, Mickelson & Preece, 1991; Hiebert, 1991; Afflerbach & Kapinus, 1993). Assessment is viewed as an ongoing process occurring continuously in the classroom and is part of or integrated with curriculum rather than an isolated event occurring before, during and after instruction (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Graham, 1994; Green, 1994; Williams, 1994; Rhodes and Shanklin, 1993; Paris and Ayres, 1994; Johns & Van Leirsbury, 1994; Cambourne and Turbill, 1994a).

Teachers realized the importance of knowing the child they were assessing and of the classroom teacher being most responsible for the assessment. They were concerned regarding the accuracy of their comments about children they did not teach. Teachers explained how they "found it difficult to comment on a child's work who [they] don't know." As Lynn noted, "... you don't know the child and haven't worked with the child ...they're only cold hard facts ...just items ... it was difficult to put a personal touch ... it all has to come together - you have to see the child as a whole ..."

Assessment Should not be too Time Consuming

Teachers felt that assessment techniques chosen for the study should not be too time consuming. Finding time for assessment and the time-consuming nature of assessment, e.g., note taking, is frequently discussed in the literature (Johns, 1994; Pryor, 1996; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Afflerbach and Kapinus, 1993; Simms, 1994). Y.

Goodman (1992a) also noted the need for assessment that reflects learning without being cumbersome.

Assessment Should be an Individualized Process and Learner-Centred

Teachers described assessment as an individualized process that considers development. They also considered it important for assessment to be flexible and appropriate for a variety of children's abilities and available books. Teachers believed that assessment strategies should be individualized for certain children and that analysis involves consideration of factors in addition to the reading samples. When discussing necessary characteristics of assessment, they recognized that the nature of the child, including age and language development, should be considered. They perceived assessment as unnecessary when the child has the skills or is reading at a certain level. Teachers noted that they record observations more often for children having difficulty and that certain assessment techniques such as the Concepts About Print items and miscue analysis were used in a more formal manner with children having difficulty. As Lynn noted "... I believe we must always consider a child's age, ability, language development, etc. when reviewing reading samples as well as the content and environment in which the reading was taken." Wiggins (1989), Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) and Wolf (1993) also emphasized that assessment should be responsive to individual students and should consist of multiple methods of collecting data depending on the individual's goals or purposes and interests.

Assessment Should be Enjoyable

Teachers maintained that assessment strategies should be enjoyable. Paris and Ayres (1994) and Green (1994) also emphasized that assessment should be enjoyable, appeal to and involve children. Anthony et al. (1991) noted that "if motivation is removed from assessment, the behaviour observed may not be like the behaviour exhibited during learning" (p. 70).

Assessment Strategies Should Involve Children

Teachers explained that assessment should involve children in decision-making through allowing them choice regarding how they would like to respond to the assessment task, e.g., choice of responding to literature through art, drama, puppetry, etc. Teachers felt that through assessment being a natural part of classroom instruction and involving children, the trust relationship between teacher and students would be supported.

Toward the end of the study, they recognized the importance of informing children of the objectives of a particular assessment task and of children and teacher choosing assessment samples from the children's work folders. Joan noted regarding oral retellings, "Unless you specifically ask or tell them what you want, it's not really fair ... unless you tell them you want to know what the story was all about..." Rachel explained, "So now I tell them, 'in this story make sure you put the events in order'... I tell them 'I'm going to be looking for a good beginning ..." Irwin-De Vitis (1996) also maintains that authentic assessment cannot exist unless the learner is involved in the decision-making process. Turbill (1994) emphasized the need for responsive evaluation which gives children opportunities to participate in evaluation. The importance of encouraging self-evaluation through allowing personal choice in selecting goals and samples has been recognized in the literature (Paris and Ayres, 1994; Simms, 1994; Y. Goodman, 1991; Bird, 1992; Johns, 1994).

Reading Assessment Strategies Being Used

At the commencement of the study all teachers were collecting reading samples which they referred to as work samples or portfolios. Table 4.1 presents an overview of the types of assessment strategies being used, assessment strategies teachers felt they should be using and assessment strategies recommended for the study.

Frequently Used Assessment Strategies

Frequently used assessment strategies were those strategies used by over half of the teachers in the study.

Writing samples. Most teachers indicated that they were using writing samples to evaluate primary children's reading. Writing samples included journal entries, writing about specific topics, story writing and home journals. The teachers felt that the writing samples "told a lot" about children's reading development including awareness of how a story is structured, e.g., inclusion of beginning, middle and ending, and "insight into the story" as reflected in inferential comments. In addition, writing skills including how closely children's spelling patterns approximated the real word and use of interesting vocabulary and appropriate sentence structure were believed to reflect children's development in reading. Teachers stated, for example, that spelling patterns indicated

Table 4.1

Reading Assessment Techniques Teachers are Currently Using, Felt They Should be Using and Recommended for Study

Were Using	Should be Using	Recommended for Study
writing samples	writing samples	running records
oral reading	running records	
questions	questions	
checklists		
in-head observations		
literature responses	literature responses	literature responses
oral retellings	oral retellings	oral retellings
written retellings	written retellings	written retellings
cloze passages	cloze passages	
Concepts About Print	Concepts About Print	
research/group projects	research/group projects	
	silent reading	
formal tests		
workbooks		
	art	
	surveys	
	self-evaluation	

facility with phonics while interesting vocabulary and sentence structure reflected depth of understanding.

Oral reading. All teachers indicated or demonstrated during my classroom visits that they "listen to children reading a lot" and have "daily oral reading." In most cases, they used real texts or teacher composed stories for oral reading assessment. Teachers indicated that they collected running records while listening to children read during shared reading, buddy reading, conferencing and reading of chart stories. While running records were generally taken during ongoing classroom activities and not "in isolation from the other children," sometimes teachers would take a child aside in order to listen to the child reading orally. Two teachers collected running records every two to three months using a two to three page passage from the basal workbook.

Questions. Several teachers were using questions "to check on comprehension." Although teachers noted that "questions were overdone" in the past, they felt that "there's a need for good questions to ask regarding literature because we don't use workbooks."

Checklists. Checklists were another assessment tool frequently mentioned by teachers. They indicated that they used checklists of skills and strategies from resource books or developed their own to assess oral reading. Some teachers noted a major limitation of checklists as preventing them from seeing "other things." Anthony et al. (1991) also cautioned that checklists "may act as blinders, producing tunnel vision" (p. 74). K. Goodman (1992a) recognized that checklists may serve an initial purpose of focusing on important processes and products, eventually being no longer needed.

In-the-head observations. All teachers commented about keeping their observations "in [their] heads" since assessment is "so much a part of every day ... daily instruction." Comments were more frequently recorded for children experiencing reading difficulties. They indicated that they infrequently recorded notes of classroom observations, but sometimes did record the number of words missed during oral reading.

Less Frequently Used Strategies

Less frequently used assessment techniques were used by two or three teachers in the study.

Response journals, retellings and cloze passages. Some of the less frequently used assessment techniques involved writing. Two teachers were using response journals and having children respond to literature following independent and teacher reading of texts. Three teachers were using oral and written retellings as a "comprehension check" and two were using cloze passages either from basal workbooks or teacher-made cloze passages about familiar themes.

Concepts About Print. The two kindergarten teachers emphasized that they were relying mostly on Concepts About Print (Clay, 1985) or components of it to assess children's reading. Information was usually collected in September and after Easter although sometimes it was collected informally over a period of time, e.g., in group retellings, during experience story reading, and shared writing. The Concepts About Print subtest was often used in a more formal manner with children having difficulty.

Research and group projects and silent reading. Grade 2 and 3 teachers referred to research and group projects as a means of assessing if children were skimming, reading for information and summarizing. These teachers also commented that they were assessing silent reading.

Formal tests. Only one teacher mentioned use of formal tests, e.g., Gates MacGinite Reading Tests as well as workbook pages to assess structural analysis skills. Other researchers have also found that standardized tests were chosen infrequently by primary and elementary teachers (Yunginger-Gehman, 1991; Calkins, 1987; Valencia et al., 1990; Johns & Van Leirsbury, 1994).

Reading Assessment Strategies Teachers Felt They Should be Using

Running Records

Teachers felt that while miscue analysis "does provide a fair amount of information" and is a valuable assessment technique, it does not fit into the everyday classroom routine. They believed that miscue analysis "does not provide a natural way of assessing reading without disrupting a class of 30 students." They also felt that miscue analysis could not be carried out in a group and was unnecessary for every child although they recognized that miscue analysis may be needed for children experiencing reading difficulties. They suggested that miscue analysis be conducted by the special education teacher and the findings or recommendations used by the special education and classroom teachers.

The majority of teachers chose running records as a viable means to assess oral reading because "you're listening to them read every day." They described running records as an informal miscue analysis and indicated that the record keeping allowed more focus than only listening to children read orally. Running records were viewed as a natural form of assessment, fitting into classroom activities. However, a Kindergarten teacher noted that "in Kindergarten you're not going to get a lot of miscues. Miscues are not a good indication of reading development. Concepts About Print would tell more."

Teachers noted that running records should be ongoing and could be collected individually or in a group. For example, running records could be collected while the rest of the class is engaged in silent reading, conferencing and paired reading or the teacher could take children aside during these times. They agreed that individual situations would dictate how they would use running records and that, for example, running records should be more indepth for some children and lead to suggestions for helping the children.

Teachers noted that leveled books could be used for running records with unseen materials being more appropriate. Experience charts, individual books made by the teacher and favourite books could also be used for running records.

Retellings

Teachers explained that children were being asked to provide informal oral retellings in some of their classrooms. Oral retellings were described as an authentic way to check comprehension as they could occur naturally in classrooms and be integrated with any subject. Teachers noted that while retellings "take time to do," they can be adapted in order to become more meaningful, ongoing classroom activities. They described different contexts within which to collect retellings including following reading of wordless picture books, oral reading of texts and silent reading.

Teachers noted that oral retellings could be done as a group (especially for Kindergarten and Grade l), and teachers could write retellings on charts and draw attention to certain words. Retellings could be made into individual or big books which could be read during shared reading. Rather than overuse of book reports, retellings can occur as book reviews and talks. Disadvantages noted of group retellings were that the same children contribute and usually children give little information in oral retellings, requiring further questioning.

Teachers discussed factors affecting retellings including the nature of the child, task and text. Lynn noted, for example, that because of one child's personality, he gave minimal information in an oral retelling. Teachers also indicated that children need to know that they are listening or reading for the purpose of retelling. In addition, certain texts were described as lending themselves to certain types of retellings. Teachers noted the need to carefully choose texts for retellings because some texts are too difficult, e.g., they contain too many characters.

Teachers felt that written retellings "get at more than questions do" and "you'd have something concrete on paper to show parents." They were described as good for organizing thoughts, e.g., the sequences of what happened in texts. However, teachers expressed concerns that sometimes the brighter children are penalized because they often give concise retellings. It was also felt that some children may "think it's a waste of time [and] don't like doing them." The quality of written retellings was also believed to "depend on the child [and] the child's writing ability."

Literature Responses

Teachers described written literature responses as a means for children to "make something their own by mov[ing] beyond the text ... and reflect[ing] on the literature." Teachers described literature responses as indicating children's involvement with literature through personal emotional responses, feelings and opinions regarding text content, text structure and/or language. Although not their main purpose, response journals were described as providing information regarding children's attitudes about reading, their comprehension and use of conventions. Teachers noted that literature responses assess whether children can "extract the main idea" and infer happenings, nature of characters, setting and the author's motive for writing the text. Teachers also noted that literature responses indicate whether children can "give a little summary as a politeness to the reader" and "make reference to a specific part of the story ... what 'stands out' in the story."

A range of literature responses was recognized as useful by teachers. Children could respond to literature by writing alternate texts from another point of view, writing an alternate ending, and engaging in book talks (oral and written) or author's chair, reading conferences, drama, puppetry and art. Teachers believed that children should be clear regarding the purpose(s) of literature responses and that texts should be carefully chosen for literature responses. They also felt that opportunities should be given for children to respond to other forms of print, e.g., poetry. Literature responses could occur following either independent or teacher reading of texts. During our individual meetings, teachers noted that situations in which children respond to literature should be realistic, e.g., they should not be expected to "do response journals on every book they read." In addition, they felt that responses should be shared orally or in writing and "teachers need to respond to what child[ren are] really saying."

Literature responses have been frequently included in portfolios and described as successful indicators of primary children's reading (Y. Goodman, 1991; Kelly, 1990; Barone, 1990 and Kiefer, 1983). Information as to whether children are involved in their reading, e.g., through interaction with the characters and text ideas, has been described as the most important information from response journals (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Sutherland, 1991). Other researchers have described response journals as indicating appreciation of literary elements and techniques used by the author to create a story including setting, writer's style, use of descriptive language, plot, characters and theme (Crowell, 1992; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Pils, 1992; Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Sutherland, 1991).

Writing Samples

Teachers frequently used writing samples to evaluate reading, described reading and writing as interrelated and felt that writing "told a lot" about children's reading Writing samples were considered to provide information regarding children's understanding and use of story structure as demonstrated in texts that have good beginning, middle and ending sentences, are coherent and in sequence. Writing samples were noted to indicate language development through children's use of words and expressions as well as spelling skills. Understanding of sentence structure was observed through utilization of complete sentences and writing conventions. Writing samples also provided information regarding children's understanding of the text. Other researchers have also cited writing samples rather than reading samples as the most common component of portfolios (Roe, 1991; Althouse, 1991; Burnham, 1986; Tierney, Carter & Desari, 1991; Johns & Van Leirsbury, 1991). Researchers have noted that reading and writing should not be separated and have cited various assessment techniques including the response journal as an effective means of linking writing with reading (Farr, 1994; Heller, 1995; Rupert & Brueggeman, 1986; Hancock, 1992, 1993).

Other Assessment Strategies

Teachers felt that silent reading could be observed, during DEAR or USSR, but they noted that teachers need to understand the act of silent reading before evaluating it. Teachers also indicated that they frequently used questions "to check on comprehension." Hiebert (1991) and Cazden (1988) have described questioning in large and small groups as the most frequent type of classroom interaction. Questioning is believed to give insights into the products and processes of children's reading and to assess deeper levels of understanding (Green, 1994; Paris & Ayres, 1994). In addition to written questions, teachers recommended that comprehension can be assessed through group oral questioning. Questioning of explicit recall and higher level thinking skills was considered important. Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers noted that comprehension of stories could also be demonstrated through art or illustrating texts heard or read. A disadvantage cited was that drawings are affected by motor development.

Although used infrequently, teachers felt that they should use cloze and research and group projects. Teachers indicated that cloze passages could be taken from basal workbooks, other commercial resources or be teacher-made. This strategy was noted to provide information regarding children's use of prediction when reading and whether they use their own language. Research and group projects were also recommended to assess children's skills in skimming, reading for information and summarizing.

Teachers agreed that Concepts About Print (Clay, 1985) provided an authentic assessment strategy and should be used with Kindergarten and some Grade l children. They noted that it could be adapted for increased authenticity, e.g., all 24 items do not need to be assessed, and that teachers could ask other questions, e.g., find color words or count the number of words. Texts other than Sand and Stones could be used and charts could be used instead of texts. Teachers thought it was an asset that Concepts About Print could be carried out in group situations.

Teachers identified interest surveys and self-evaluation as assessment techniques that they were not currently using but which they felt teachers should be using. Grade 2 and 3 teachers felt that reading surveys completed by children could be used to assess attitudes towards reading. Teachers could also complete surveys when observing children during silent reading, during conversations with children and by questioning and probing children.

Most teachers indicated that they infrequently involved students in self-assessment but that this should be considered an important assessment strategy. During individual meetings, several teachers noted that they were beginning to involve students in self-assessment. They sometimes had children select their best writing samples and children also self-evaluated their performance during author's chair.

Assessment Strategies Selected for the Study

While teachers indicated that they were, and should be, using writing samples, questions, Concepts About Print subtests, silent reading, cloze, and research and group projects, these techniques were not selected for the study. Various reasons can be proposed for teachers not selecting writing samples to be used in the study. Perhaps they believed that the particular reading skills that could be assessed through writing samples could also be assessed in written retellings and literature responses. In addition, I reminded teachers that the focus of the study was on reading and not writing. Teachers may not have selected questioning for the study because of increased use of retellings to assess understanding. Teachers decided to assess silent reading through oral and written retellings as well as literature responses as they felt that silent reading behaviours could be observed as children engaged in retellings and literature responses. Although Concepts About Print items were used by Kindergarten teachers, the subtest items were probably not selected for the study because only kindergarten teachers were using them. Cloze and research and group projects may not have been perceived as natural classroom assessment tasks which were appropriate for all primary grades or as providing specific information regarding childrens' reading strategies and their strengths and needs. Of those assessment strategies which teachers felt they should be using, oral reading, oral retellings, written retellings and literature responses were selected for the study.

Oral reading was used daily and involved real texts and basal workbook passages. Teachers stated that oral reading provided information regarding children's use of graphophonic, contextual and semantic cuing systems, author's meaning, word recognition and oral reading fluency. Oral reading was also noted to provide information regarding fluency and utilization of strategies of predicting and metacognition.

Informal reading inventories, miscue analysis and running records have been listed in the literature as frequently used assessment measures for oral reading (Y. Goodman, 1992; Johns & Van Leirsbury, 1994; Paradis, Chatton, Bosewell, Smith and Yowich, 1991). Informal reading inventories and audiotapes of reading have also been included in portfolio assessment (Y. Goodman, 1991; Tierney et al., 1991; Valencia, McGinley and Pearson, 1990). Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) and K. Goodman, Y. Goodman & Hood (1989) noted that oral reading provided information regarding children's performance while actually engaged in reading including the extent of interrelation of the cuing systems, predicting and confirming strategies, and integration of text information with prior knowledge to construct meaning.

Oral and written retellings and literature responses were used by teachers although less frequently. Through recall of important or main ideas and details, oral and written retellings were viewed as providing information about children's understanding or knowledge of what a story is about. Additional information noted from retellings included the child's sense of story structure or the extent to which constructed texts have good beginning, middle and ending sentences, whether children write coherently and in sequence as well as an indication of oral language development. Awareness of sentence structure was noted through children's use of complete sentences and correct conventions. Retellings were also described as providing information regarding children's ability to summarize, infer and include personal experiences, opinions and reactions.

Retellings have been frequently mentioned in the literature as assessment strategies (Y. Goodman, Watson and Burke, 1987; Johns & Van Leirsbury, 1994; Anthony et al., 1991). Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) and Hiebert (1991) described retellings as an authentic, naturalistic way of assessing comprehension and awareness of the components of story structure which can be inferred from listening for children's underlying strategies.

Response journals were believed to provide information regarding children's involvement with literature. Response journals were described as providing information about children's attitudes towards reading, their comprehension and use of conventions.

Teachers' Changing Views Regarding Assessment

As a result of their experiences in the research project, teachers reported that they had changed many of their views about assessment. Some teachers indicated how now "everything [they] do is part of assessment," and they "do it differently now ..." one of the main differences being recording of comments. In-the-head observations, although used frequently at the beginning of the study, were not recommended as a technique which teachers should be using. As teachers engaged in recording during the study, they began to feel more comfortable regarding what to observe and record. They realized the need for anecdotal recording beyond or in addition to numerical comments. Martha noted, for example,

> "the quantity is obvious ... these are your first reactions ... the quality is more indepth ... subjective reactions are more difficult and you need to give more thought to it ... it's sort of the next level again as a teacher ... it's partly due to how busy you are as a teacher rather than stopping and smelling the roses ... we weren't taking our comments beyond 'this is a fine answer' to include exactly what the child's sample shows ..."

As indicated in Chapter 2, some researchers have found that teachers infrequently make written records. Anthony, Johnson, Mickelson and Preece (1991) noted that teachers described their anecdotal records as sporadic and inconsistent. However, other researchers have concluded that anecdotal records of observations were frequently included in children's portfolios (Yunginger-Gehman, 1991; Bailey et al., 1988).

The importance of the teacher's head as an evaluative record has been emphasized in the literature. Cambourne and Turbill (1994a) concluded from their work with a group of teachers who examined the evaluation process in writing that the teacher's head is an important evaluation record. The researchers explained how teachers' unconscious interpretation of children's comments and follow-up decisions made 'on the run' were kept in their heads and that teachers only recorded these 'in the head interpretations' for accountability reasons and for long term planning. Hood (1989) observed that in addition to documented data, teachers record mental notes on each child.

Reasons given by teachers in the study for recording in their heads included that it was "the natural thing to do" since growth "is always there [and] can be observed everyday anyway." Other researchers have described teachers as constantly involved in assessment whether they are consciously aware of doing so, as continuously observing the development of language and knowledge in children in different settings and integrating this information in order to make instructional and curricular decisions (Pryor, 1996; Y. Goodman, 1991; Cambourne, Turbill, & Dal Santo, 1994b; Hiebert, 1991; Harste 1994).

Another reason mentioned by teachers for recording in their heads included lack of confidence in their own judgments. Cambourne et al. (1994) also recognized that teachers lacked awareness of the trustworthiness and credibility of their observations. From engaging in responsive evaluation and from sharing, discussing and reflecting, teachers in other studies have also reported increased confidence in their observations and judgments regarding student growth and development (Simms, 1994; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Cambourne et al., 1994b; Mathie, 1994).

Recording was described as helping with completion of report cards. Teachers explained that when completing report cards, they used to "... picture the child in [their] minds along with any specific observations, ... and would have to go and look for concrete evidence from the samples."

Teachers described analyzing and recording their comments as helping them to "know children" and "to think about what children are and are not doing." Teachers commented that the research project helped them learn how to analyze and be more specific in their comments. While some teachers indicated that they had been assessing children's accomplishments of grade level curriculum objectives or report card expectations prior to the study, other teachers described analyzing and recording comments and observations according to objectives as a new experience. As Rachel noted

> "I never realized about evaluating ... I remember whole language inservices in Labrador ... I can remember learning about putting children in groups to write but I can't remember the next step... analyzing it. I can remember the conferencing and sharing of stories but I can't remember emphasis placed on evaluating this ... e.g., being told 'Now you have a sample ... how do you evaluate it?'... no not being asked ... 'How can this help you understand the child's development?"

Teachers explained that prior to the study they could "talk generally regarding what their [children's] strengths and weaknesses were, using comments like, "Ann has made progress or is having difficulty." However, they realized that these comments "don't tell enough [that they] ... need to be specific." From using the assessment strategies of running records, retellings and literature responses, teachers noted that they were more informed and aware of the purposes and criteria of assessment, had "specific things to look for" and comment on and were asking more specific questions, e.g., "Does he stop and self-correct? Is he confident? Does he read at an appropriate rate for the text?" They noted that they were "... cluing in to what children are doing when reading ... it's almost an automatic response now to question if the child is using phonics, his language or whatever ..." Teachers emphasized the importance of "know[ing] beforehand what you're looking for" and described themselves as focusing only on certain criteria in an assessment sample. They noted that "now [they] only look for one or two things in retellings ... there may be other things you could pick out but they're not always done in every piece ..." As one teacher explained, "I would ask myself 'What am I going to look for in this retelling? What does the story lend itself to?' If a story lends itself to character development that will be what I'd comment on..." They gradually realized that "It's not important for children to retell everything." Teachers realized that "Maybe one reason is sufficient" as a literature response.

Teachers changed their opinions regarding assessment strategies as well as assessment criteria as they used and reflected on informal reading assessment strategies. Y. Goodman (1991) and K. Goodman (1992b) also observed that teachers changed their opinions regarding the kinds of information they decided to document and the purpose(s) of their assessment strategies. Pryor (1996) noted that initially, some Grade 1 teachers were unaware of their assessment criteria. Teachers in this study were becoming more aware of their own criteria or expectations. Martha observed that

> "We [Lynn and I] are coming at this from two different angles. Lynn wants to see what level the child is on and I want to find out how does he read ... what strategies is he using... She [Lynn] has to have somewhere in her head what is acceptable for Grade 2 ..."

Other changes mentioned by teachers included children and teacher choosing assessment samples from the children's work folders. Teachers explained that initially children's "... work folders were also their assessment folder ... Now they have work folders and samples for assessment ... ones that will help to answer questions on their report cards ... Children pick what samples they like best."

Teachers gradually emphasized process type assessments and less pencil and paper assessment tasks requiring "spend[ing] real time with the child." As one teacher noted,

> "It's not the finished product (the samples) that give the information but when I'm sitting doing this [the interpretation of samples] I'm getting to know the child ... you have to spend time with individual children doing this in order to know the child."

Martha explained, "Now when I think if there are other things needed in order to complete a report on a child, I may think that I need another running record. Before it was pencil and paper things that I used." One process type assessment strategy mentioned by teachers involved the need to continue listening to children "... reading a lot in different contexts" and in everyday natural classroom contexts. Ann noted, for example, that "... during reader's chair when the child reads to the class I would make jot notes regarding choice of book, its caliber and the child's handling of it ..."

As indicated in Chapter 2, the importance of process assessment as providing essential information on reading strategies used to process text and construct meaning has been recognized by other educators as well (Smith, 1994; Harp, 1991; Valencia & Pearson, 1987; Rhodes & Natheson-Mejia 1992 ; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994a). While some writers believe that assessment should be process rather than product focused, others recognize the need to integrate process and product information claiming that each cannot be assessed separately as it is through the product that a student demonstrates the necessary processes (Farr & Lowe, 1994; Valencia & Pearson, 1987; Harp, 1988; Paradis et al., 1991).

Individual teachers noted increased use of running records, Concepts About Print (Clay, 1985), literature responses and oral retellings. From their increased use of these assessment techniques, teachers understood the usefulness of the techniques. For example, initially some teachers thought that "eye balling" the child's oral reading was the only realistic way to assess cueing systems and strategies used. From listening to other teachers familiar with running records and from their actual use of them, teachers realized that running records gave "much needed information."

Kindergarten teachers found that use of wordless picture books for oral retellings gave information but because of their time consuming nature "were not practical ... for a teacher who has two classes." Teachers' growing understanding of the purpose of oral retellings was obvious. They felt, for example, that it was not important for children "to retell everything," and that "... a synopsis and higher order thinking skills such as synthesizing are more important." They realized that the purpose was not to assess rote memorization. Rachel noted,

> "Is retelling a test of memory or comprehension? ... it seems like we're testing for memory when we expect them to retell everything whereas what we are really interested in knowing is does the child understand or get this story with all his stops and self-corrections during oral reading ... We don't need to beat it to death but perhaps some general ideas ... how to get this balance [of enough information]?"

Differences between oral retellings as compared with answering questions were noted. Ann explained, "Retelling is the story as a whole as compared with questions. Retellings are a more natural, informal way [rather than my questions] ... questions are formal ... Now I think retellings are good ... I didn't think so first."

Teachers changed their opinions regarding the importance of written retellings as an assessment technique. Initially, teachers agreed that written retellings should be used but as they observed children giving written retellings, several teachers expressed concerns about their value. Written retellings were described as "too much of a major task and they [children] got daunted ... They never got the written retellings finished." Another teacher commented, "Of all the things we used written retellings would be what I would use least because the children give up." Teachers felt that some children probably thought "... it's a waste of time [and] don't like doing them." In addition, teachers were concerned that brighter children could be penalized because of their concise writing. Morrow (1982, 1989) has also noted that retellings are not an easy procedure for students and that kindergarten teachers tend to view retellings as time consuming and difficult.

Initially, some teachers combined responses and retelling and were calling them "reading journals." Through discussion, the distinction became clearer and teachers noted that criteria such as story structure, sequence, details and conversation or dialogue were not as important in responses as they were in retellings.

Teachers also became more aware of the importance of appropriate texts for various assessments. In individual meetings, teachers commented that cumulative stories "have too much detail for Kindergarten children to remember [and that] maybe cumulative stories are better in Grades 2 or 3." Texts with a "lot of episodes" were described as difficult because "young children often don't synthesize it - they lose track of what's going on here." The most appropriate stories for retelling were described as having beginning, problem/solution and ending. Teachers also commented that some of the texts they used for retellings contained "controlled, short, choppy sentences." It was noted, for example, that "the language in A Kiss for Little Bear is controlled, not good" causing children to retell in a manner like, "He did this and then he ..."

Summary

In summary, essential characteristics of informal reading assessment strategies identified by teachers in the study included that it be comprehensive, meaningful, holistic and linked to instruction. They also felt that informal reading assessment strategies should be enjoyable, involve children and not be time consuming.

Informal teacher-based assessment strategies which were being used by teachers included writing samples, oral reading, questions, checklists, in-the-head observations, response journals, retellings, cloze passages, Concepts About Print (Clay, 1985), research and group projects, silent reading, formal tests and workbook pages. Teachers identified running records, oral and written retellings, literature responses, writing samples, silent reading, questioning, cloze, research and group projects, Concepts About Print (Clay, 1985), art, interest surveys and self-evaluation as reading assessment strategies they felt they should be using. Of those assessment strategies that teachers felt they should be using, oral reading, oral retellings, written retellings and literature responses were selected for the study.

As a result of their experiences in the research project, teachers reported that they had changed many of their views about teacher-based assessment. They began to record more, gave more analytic and specific comments, were more aware of the criteria of each assessment strategy, utilized the reading samples more often and understood the usefulness of certain informal assessment strategies.

CHAPTER 5

Results and Discussion of Running Records

This chapter is organized into two main sections. The first section is comprised of four sub-sections in which teachers' descriptions and my analysis of primary children's running records are presented for each grade from Kindergarten to Grade 3. In the last section, similarities and differences in teachers' descriptions of running records across the primary grades as well as similarities and differences between teachers' and my analyses of running records are discussed and related to the literature.

Running Records of Kindergarten Children

The following results are based on running records for Kindergarten children following their independent reading of texts in both terms. Analysis of teachers' comments and children's running records are presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4.

Graphic Cues

As indicated in Table 5.1, teachers made far more positive comments (28%) about Kindergarten children's use of graphic cues than about lack of or inappropriate use of graphic cues (15%) in term l. The same trend continued into the second term (Table 5.2) although the percentages were lower. In my analysis of Kindergarten children's miscues presented in Tables 5.3 and 5.4, I found relatively heavy reliance on graphic cues during both terms with 68% of their miscues in term l and 78% of their miscues in term 2 having high or partial graphic similarity to words in the text. Teachers mostly provided general comments about Kindergarten children's use of visual cues and about the graphic similarity between miscues and text words although they did cite some specific examples

Table 5.1
Summary of Teachers' Comments on Running Records Term 1

Grade	K		1		2		3	
	P=47	N=27	P=62	N=73	P=296	N=148	P=232	N=195
Category								
Graphic Cues								
Graphic Similarity & Visual Cues	+11%		+15%	-1%	+8%	-11%	+10%	-5%
Letter & Word Configuration		-7%						
Reversal				-3%		-2%		
Location: Parts of Words								
Beginning/Initial Consonants	+6%	-7%	+3%	-3%	+20%	-1%	+2%	-1%
Middle					+2%	-1%		
Ending					+1%	-1%	+1%	-11%
Combination					+1%			
Word Recognition								
Word Recognition & Sight Vocabulary	+2%		+2%	-4%	+2%			-5%
Syllabication			+2%	-4%				
Fluency	+9%				+2%	-7%	+6%	-11%
Sight Words					+1%	-5%	+1%	-4%
Total Graphic Cues	+28%	-15%	+21%	-15%	+36%	-25%	+22%	-37%
Phonic Cues								
General Using Phonic Cue	+2%	-15%		-16%	+8%	-7%	+4%	-9%
Phonic & Other Cues/Strategies			+2%					
Reasons for Sounding Out					+1%			
Location								
Beginning Sounds	+4%	-4%		-5%	+5%	-1%		-5%
Vowels								-2%
Combination								
Total: Phonic Cues	+6%	-19%	+2%	-22%	+14%	-8%	+5%	-15%

Contextual Cues								
Context/Background Experiences			+10%	-3%	+2%	-3%	+3%	-1%
Using Language	+11%		+19%	-3%	+11%	-5%	+31%	-8%
Making Sense					+6%	-9%	+7%	-4%
Reading for Meaning	+13%	-4%	+2%	-1%	+4%	-7%	+4%	-9%
Utilization of Context/Concept	+4%							
Using Pictures	+17%	-7%	+27%	-1%	+7%	-10%	+2%	
Total: Contextual Cues	+45%	-11%	+58%	-8%	+30%	-34%	+47%	-22%
Author's Meaning								
Amount & Kind of Meaning Change	+2%	-11%	+2%	-1%	+4%	-5%	+10%	-7%
Reasons for Losing Author's Meaning						-1%		
Total: Author's Meaning	+2%	-11%	+2%	-1%	+4%	-5%	+10%	-7%
Other								
Nature of Child								
Attitude Towards Reading								
Background		-11%						
Expression							+1%	
Other Strategies								
General: Presence/Absence of			+2%	-3%	+1%	-1%	+1%	
Guessing/Risk Taking	+2%			-11%				-2%
Self-Correcting	+6%	-4%		-1%	+5%	-7%	+5%	-2%
Nature of Text								
Difficulty		-4%		-7%	+2%	-1%	+1%	-3%
Text Language		-7%	+2%	-14%	+4%	-8%		-10%
Text Pictures	+2%	-7%	+5%	-15%	+1%	-7%		
Total: Other	+19%	-33%	+8%	-51%	+13%	-24%	+9%	-17%
General Evaluative								
General: Descriptors			+3%		+1%	-1%	+1%	
Amount of Miscues		-7%	+3%	-3%			+2%	-2%
Levels: %	+9%	-4%			+2%	-3%	+5%	
Development			+3%					
Total: General Evaluative	+9%	-11%	+10%	-3%	+3%	-4%	+7%	-2%

* Note: A plus sign is used to designate positive comments; a minus sign to indicate negative comments.

Table 5.2

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Running Records Term 2

Grade	K		1		2		3	
	P=47	N=27	P=62	N=73	P=296	N=148	P=232	N=195
Category								
Graphic Cues								
Graphic Similarity & Visual Cues	+6%	-3%	+9%	-3%	+12%	-7%	+8%	-3%
Letter & Word Configuration	+1%							
Reversal								-1%
Location: Parts of Words								
Beginning/Initial Consonants	+3%	-1%	+7%	-1%	+6%	-1%	+2%	-1%
Middle						-1%		-2%
Ending	+1%	-1%		-3%	+1%	-4%		-9%
Combination	+2%		+3%		+5%	-1%	+4%	
Word Recognition								
Word Recognition & Sight Vocabulary				-1%	+1%	-5%		-4%
Omission					+2%	-2%		
Syllabication	+1%		+1%	-7%	+1%		+2%	-1%
Fluency	+1%		+2%	-1%	+2%	-1%	+2%	-7%
Root Words				-1%			+2%	-1%
Total Graphic Cues	+17%	-5%	+24%	-15%	+31%	-23%	+20%	-29%

Phonic Cues								
Sounding/Using Phonic Cues	+12%			-5%	+12%	-3%	+10%	-4%
Reasons for Sounding Out						-2%		
Location								
Beginning	+3%		+1%	-2%	+4%		+4%	-4%
Middle						-1%		
Vowels				-1%		-1%		-2%
Ending								-1%
Combination			+1%				+1%	
Phonic & Other Cues/Strategies			+1%	-1%				
Total: Phonic Cues	+15%		+10%	-9%	+16%	-8%	+15%	-10%
Contextual Cues								
Context/Background Experiences			+7%	-3%	+4%	-5%	+4%	
Using Language	+16%	-6%	+22%	-6%	+16%	-12%	+28%	-5%
Making Sense	+6%	-19%	+3%	-3%	+4%	-6%	+8%	-4%
Reading for Meaning	+2%	-5%	+3%	-4%	+7%	-11%	+5%	-19%
Utilization of Context/Concepts	+6%	-1%						
Using Pictures	+8%	-2%	+9%		+5%		+2%	-2%
Total: Contextual Cues	+38%	-34%	+44%	-15%	+36%	-34%	+47%	-30%
Author's Meaning								
Amount & Kind of Meaning Change	+4%	-1%	+3%	-2%	+3%	-4%	+8%	-13%
Reasons for Losing Author's Meaning				-2%		-1%		
Total: Author's Meaning	+4%	-1%	+3%	-3%	+3%	-5%	+8%	-13%

Other								
Nature of Child								
Attitude Towards Reading		-1%				-1%		-1%
Background	+2%	-2%						
Personality: Confidence			+1%	-1%				
Familiarity with Text				-3%				
Expression							+1%	-3%
Other Concepts								
Concepts About Print	+1%		+3%	-15%				
Other Strategies								
General: Presence/Absence of	+3%	-1%	+2%	-1%				
Guessing/Risk Taking	+2%	-14%	+1%	-3%	+1%		+2%	
Self-Correcting	+3%	-3%	+2%	-8%	+4%	-2%	+2%	-1%
Nature of Text								
Difficulty		-1%	+1%	-3%		-3%	+1%	-3%
Text Language	+4%	-16%		-10%	+1%	-21%		-9%
Text Pictures		-8%		-3%	+2%	-3%		-1%
Nature of Task								
Teachers' Approaches				-1%				
Total: Other	+15%	-46%	+12%	-48%	+8%	-30%	+6%	-18%
General Evaluative								
General: Descriptors	+4%		+4%	-5%	+2%		+3%	
Amount of Miscues	+2%	-2%	+1%	-2%				
Levels: Percentages	+5%	-12%	+1%	-1%	+4%			
Development			+1%	-3%				
Total: General Evaluative	+11%	-14%	+8%	-10%	+6%		+3%	

Table 5.3

Researcher's Analysis of Running Records Term 1

Grade	K(n=25)	1(n=32)	2(=157)	3(n=214)
High & Partial Graphic Similarity	68%	91%	87%	67%
High Contextual Acceptability	56%	50%	31%	55%
Partial Contextual Acceptability	8%	28%	27%	21%
Meaning Change	60%	22%	19%	54%

Table 5.4

Researcher's Analysis of Running Records Term 2

Grade	K(n=102)	1(n=177)	2(n=384)	3(n=328)
High & Partial Graphic Similarity	78%	81%	87%	73%
High Contextual Acceptability	33%	34%	24%	39%
Partial Contextual Acceptability	33%	24%	33%	32%
Meaning Change	38%	31%	29%	51%

of miscues that were visually similar to the text, e.g., "/even one/ is close to /everyone/." Kindergarten children were also described as using, looking at or relying on word configuration.

Although teachers expressed few concerns regarding Kindergarten children's lack of use of graphic cues, particularly in term 2, children were sometimes noted to "... not attend to print detail" and to rely more on visual memory or recall of the story language. Another reason given by teachers for some Kindergarten children not attending to visual detail was that they were fluent readers and did not "need to focus on individual words" when reading.

Within the Graphic category, location of cues was a frequent focus of comments and examples were provided by teachers with particular reference to word beginnings. Teachers did not frequently refer to Kindergarten children's attention to endings of words, although they noted that sometimes miscues were graphically similar in both beginnings and endings to text words.

Only two teachers made specific comments throughout both terms about the extent of Kindergarten children's word recognition and ability to divide words into syllables. Although more teachers described Kindergarten children as fluent readers who read phrases quickly, confidently and naturally, they also commented that some Kindergarten children were not fluent readers and tended to repeat words.

Phonic Cues

Six percent of teachers' positive comments in term l (Table 5.1) and 15% of their positive comments in term 2 (Table 5.2) referred to Kindergarten children's use of phonic cues when reading. Nineteen percent of teachers' concerns in term l noted Kindergarten children's difficulties with phonic cues. Hence, it appears that in term 1, teachers were concerned about Kindergarten children's use of phonic cues but that by term 2, they felt children had developed more proficiency in this area.

The majority of comments in this category were general statements about Kindergarten children's use or lack of use of letter-sound relationships, word attack skills and decoding. As with graphic cues, teachers focused their comments on Kindergarten children's use of beginning or initial sounds and noted specific examples when beginning sounds were used.

Contextual Cues

As indicated in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, teachers described Kindergarten children as frequently using contextual cues when reading and made more comments about use of contextual cues than any other aspect of running records. Forty-five percent (term 1) and 38% (term 2) of teachers' positive comments referred to instances of Kindergarten children using contextual cues when reading orally. In addition, teachers expressed frequent concerns in term 2 regarding utilization of contextual cues. In both terms and particularly in term l, there were more comments regarding facility than difficulty with contextual cues. In my analysis of Kindergarten children's miscues (Tables 5.3 and 5.4), I found that 56% of their miscues in term 1 and 33% of their miscues in term 2 had high contextual acceptability.

Teachers described Kindergarten children as using contextual cues in five major ways. First, they indicated that children made use of story context, ideas, and concepts in the story as well as their knowledge of texts to read orally. For example, teachers told of how a child might figure out the word "plum" in The Very Hungry Caterpillar because of familiarity with the story. Second, children used their oral language and familiarity with text language to help them remember or predict words. This was the most frequent sub-category within the Contextual category in term 2. Teachers talked about children "using [their] language intuitively" to produce miscues that "sound natural," about miscues reflecting Kindergarten children's pronunciations, and about miscues being caused by over prediction of language, as in Sarah's substitution of /It's/ for /I'm/ in the sentence "his mother said, I'm..."

Third, teachers described Kindergarten children as using picture clues to "figure out words." A higher percentage of positive comments referred to children's use of pictures than to any other category in term l. Sometimes Kindergarten children were noted to use pictures in combination with other strategies. For example, teachers noted that one child "use[d] a combination of picture and beginning sounds" and that another "rel[ied] on repetition, pictures and beginning consonants." However, teachers expressed more concerns in term l regarding Kindergarten children's lack of utilization of picture clues when reading than about other aspects of contextual cues.

Fourth, teachers identified ways that Kindergarten children "tr[ied] to make sense" when reading through relating the text word to a familiar word, omitting unknown words when they did not "make sense" or when unsure of a word, and rereading. However, in contrast to concerns with use of picture cues in term 1, most concerns regarding use of contextual cues in term 2 involved Kindergarten children not making sense when reading.

Fifth, teachers frequently noted in term l that Kindergarten children were reading for meaning and cited examples to illustrate this. However, they also expressed some concerns regarding miscues that indicated lack of reading for meaning.

Author's Meaning

Although teachers did talk about the consistency of Kindergarten children's miscues with the author's meaning, only 2% of their comments in term l and 4% of their comments in term 2 referred to miscues not changing the author's meaning. In my analysis, I found that 60% of Kindergarten children's miscues in term l and 38% of their miscues in term 2 involved no or only a partial change in the author's meaning. Teachers believed that changes to the author's meaning were due to children's lack of familiarity with text vocabulary or the presence of too many unknown words.

Other Factors

During both terms, teachers frequently commented on other factors affecting Kindergarten children's oral reading. Eleven percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 15% of their positive comments in term 2 described other factors as facilitating reading. Thirty-three percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 46% of their concerns in term 2 referred to other factors hindering Kindergarten children's oral reading.

Other factors identified by teachers were placed into three subcategories - the nature of the child, the nature of the text and the utilization of strategies. Fewer comments were made about the nature of the child than the other two subcategories. When teachers did refer to the nature of the child, they indicated that kindergarten children's background experiences, including reading prior to kindergarten and extent of background information affected oral reading. Children's attitudes towards and interest in reading were also occasionally associated with oral reading proficiency.

One of the most frequent concerns expressed about running records involved the difficulty of certain texts used for oral reading. The presence of text words not in the children's vocabulary or of nonsense words was viewed as contributing to text difficulty. In addition to words, teachers commented on whether Kindergarten children knew the meaning of text phrases. One teacher observed, for example, that "[Ann] probably doesn't know the meaning of 'trout stream'" when reading The Runaway Bunny. Sometimes children's difficulty with words and phrases was believed to be due to the structure of the texts or the amount and kind of contextual supports provided. The presence of text language that contained patterns, repetition, natural structure and rhythm, as found in The Napping House, was believed to facilitate oral reading. However, patterns located in the "last parts of sentences" were not believed to be helpful. Teachers also commented on the absence of pictures in texts as well as the nature of pictures as not helping to tell the story and contributing to oral reading difficulties. Several of the illustrations in The Cat on the Mat and Each Peach, Pear, Plum, for example, were described as not realistic.

In addition to commenting on the nature of children and texts, teachers also noted the presence and absence of additional strategies used by Kindergarten children, including the extent of self-corrections in running records. One reason hypothesized for Kindergarten children's self corrections was that they were reading for meaning and "knew the word wasn't correct." However, children sometimes did not self-correct because they were "using all [their] energy for [oral] reading."

Another strategy teachers noted was the extent to which Kindergarten children were risk taking, guessing or attempting unknown words while reading. Particularly in term 2, they expressed more concern that Kindergarten children were afraid to guess or take risks, "were stopping and waiting to be told the word and didn't see risk-taking as a strategy ... that it's ok to make mistakes." Reasons cited by teachers for Kindergarten children not taking risks included not knowing "what to do," unfamiliarity with the story and being afraid to guess.

General Evaluative

Nine percent (term l) and 11% (term 2) of teachers' positive comments were of an evaluative nature whereas 11% (term l) and l4% (term 2) of their concerns were of a negative evaluative nature. Teachers' evaluative comments consisted of reference to children's reading levels, the amount of miscues, and general descriptors or adjectives such as "well," "very good" and "fine" to describe Kindergarten children's oral reading.

Teachers' most frequent evaluative comments referred to Kindergarten children's levels of reading. Teachers associated texts with predetermined reading levels and evaluated children's word recognition in relation to those levels. For example, one child might be described as reading at level 3 while another was described as at level 20. Teachers also referred to reading levels as indicative of emergent and independent stages of reading development. Some Kindergarten children who could read up to level 20, for example, were described as independent readers. In addition to levels, teachers sometimes calculated percentages of children's word recognition accuracy or described the number of miscues as ranging from "no miscues" to "... not know[ing] a lot of words."

Running Records of Grade 1 Children

Graphic Cues

As indicated in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, teachers frequently commented on Grade 1 children's use of graphic cues when reading orally. Twenty-one percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 24% of these comments in term 2 referred to instances of Grade 1 children using visual or graphic cues. In addition, l5% of teachers' concerns in both terms described Grade 1 children's difficulties with the graphic cuing system. Grade 1 children's facility with graphic cues was more frequently noted than their difficulty. In my analysis of Grade 1 children's miscues (Tables 5.3 and 5.4), I found that they used graphic cues more frequently than other cueing systems in both terms. Ninety-one percent of Grade 1 children's miscues in term l and 81% of their miscues in term 2 had high or partial graphic similarity to words in the text.

Within the Graphic category, teachers most frequently provided general comments about miscues having "graphic similarity," or being "visually similar" or "close" to the text. They described the extent to which miscues were visually similar to text words, cited specific examples of graphically similar letters and words, and indicated that visual or graphic clues were used in combination with other strategies including background knowledge and language.

Of all locations, teachers most frequently noted that Grade 1 children utilized graphic cues at the beginning of words although in term 2 some miscues involved use of cues from both the beginning and ending of words. Teachers also noted that sometimes Grade 1 children attended to word beginnings in combination with other cues including picture and context clues. Although infrequent, the majority of teachers' concerns about location involved omissions or additions of word endings.

In relation to word recognition, teachers commented on specific words causing difficulty and noted differences among Grade 1 children in the extent of their sight vocabulary or knowledge of "common words." Children's awareness that words have parts and attempts at syllabicating were also noted, as were difficulties in this area, e.g., "not blending ... the syllables back together to make a real word" and "not look[ing] for smaller words or chunks in the word." Finally, some Grade 1 children were described as "fluent readers" of some but not all texts.

Phonic Cues

In term 1, teachers commented more often about Grade 1 children's difficulty (22%) than facility (2%) with using phonic cues, although in term 2 ten percent of teachers' positive comments referred to children sounding and using phonics. The majority of teachers' comments about phonics were of a general nature as they described and cited examples of Grade 1 children "using phonics." Teachers also noted instances of Grade 1 children "not sounding ...unknown words and confusing certain sounds, e.g., long and short vowel sounds as well as vowel sounds in middle syllables."

Beginning sounds were the primary focus of teachers' attention. Grade 1 children were described as starting to look at and use beginning sounds although they did not always do so. Teachers also noted that Grade 1 children used pictures, language and context cues in addition to beginning sounds.

Contextual Cues

Of all categories, teachers most frequently focused on contextual cues, providing more comments on Grade 1 children's facility than difficulty with using these cues. As the data in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate, 58% of teachers' positive comments in term l and 44% of their positive comments in term 2 referred to children's use of contextual cues. Eight percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 15% of their concerns in term 2 were related to difficulties with contextual cues. In my analysis of Grade 1 children's miscues, I found that 50% of their miscues in term l and 34% of their miscues in term 2 had high contextual acceptability. In addition, 28% of their miscues in term l and 24% of their miscues in term 2 indicated use of contextual cues from parts of sentences.

Teachers' descriptions of Grade 1 children's use of contextual cues were placed into four subcategories. First, they gave general statements indicating that Grade 1 children used context or made miscues that "fit in the story." This involved children relating texts to their own experience as well as familiarity with and memory of similar texts. One child was noted, for example, to use the context of sickness when reading Daddy's Day while another child "... read some and compose[d] some of the story."

Second, of all categories of contextual cues, teachers most often referred to Grade 1 children as sounding like language and predicting text language based on their oral language. However, Grade 1 children's oral reading was sometimes described as not sounding right or "... fit[ting] in with the rest of the sentence" and as reflecting immature oral language including vocabulary, pronunciation and the way they explained things. In addition to oral language, teachers commented that Grade 1 children used text language as they followed or became familiar with the pattern in the text. Joe was observed, for example, to "use the pattern, e.g., /followed her/" when reading Through the Deep Snow: Barney's Story. Sometimes Grade 1 children were described as using language in combination with other cues including phonics, pictures and graphics.

Third, teachers described Grade 1 children as reading for meaning and making meaningful miscues. When one child omitted text, for example, she was described as "leav[ing] out what doesn't make sense to her." However, sometimes Grade 1 children were described as not making meaning, losing meaning and not making meaningful miscues because of the number of miscues and lack of self-corrections. Closely related to reading for meaning were comments on whether or not Grade 1 children were making or trying to make sense.

Finally, teachers frequently commented on the extent to which Grade 1 children were using or reading pictures when reading. The extent of reliance on picture clues varied among children and across time. In addition to general observations that children "look[ed] at pictures," teachers sometimes gave examples, e.g., when Helen's substituted /sea/ for /stream/, one teacher commented that "the picture probably looks like the sea to her." Some teachers noted that Grade 1 children used picture cues when confronted with difficult vocabulary and that picture cues were used in combination with other cues including phonics and contextual cues. However, sometimes children's use of other strategies was believed to interfere with the use of picture cues as when Charles seemed "unable to use the picture clues for animals because he over-predicted language ..."

Author's Meaning

Only a few references were made to Grade 1 children "hav[ing] the author's meaning." As the data in Tables 5.3 and 5.4 illustrate, I found that 22% of Grade 1 children's miscues in term 1 and 31% of their miscues in term 2 were consistent with or only partially changed the author's meaning. Teachers sometimes described Grade 1 children as "... making [their] own meaning but not the meaning in the text." Their lack of familiarity with text vocabulary and concentration on word recognition to the exclusion of the author's meaning were mentioned as reasons for losing the author's meaning.

Other Factors

Of all categories, most of teachers' concerns involved other factors affecting Grade 1 children's oral reading including the nature of the child, text and utilization of strategies. Fifty-one percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 48% of their concerns in term 2 referred to other factors. Fewer positive comments about other factors were given (8% in term l and 12% in term 2).

A few comments were focused on within-child factors including prior exposure to print, understanding of sound-symbol correspondence and confidence in oral reading. For example, one teacher hypothesized that Helen "probably ... didn't know letters and sounds when she entered Grade 1 [and] didn't have much exposure to books." Aaron and Erica were described as confident oral readers while Joe was noted to be "afraid to get anything wrong."

Of all other factors, teachers commented most frequently in both terms regarding the nature of texts as affecting Grade 1 children's oral reading. Text language or unfamiliar text vocabulary was frequently described as affecting their oral reading. One teacher noted, for example, that /bandanna/ was "... not a meaningful familiar word - we don't call it that anymore." First words in sentences as well as lack of meaningful, contextual clues were believed to cause oral reading difficulty. Difficult text patterns such as labeling were described as hindering Grade 1 children's use of contextual cues. Of all concerns about text factors, more were expressed in both terms regarding lack of picture clues for certain words. Teachers were also concerned with the quality of pictures; some pictures were described as not helping with the recognition of certain words because they were "not good [or] strong picture clues" for those words.

In addition to within-child and text factors, teachers recognized that Grade 1 children used a variety of strategies when oral reading although they also noted difficulties with strategies such as risk-taking and self-correcting. At times, children stopped when reading, waited to be told unfamiliar words, were "dependent on the listener" and did not self-correct. Reasons given by teachers for children not self-correcting included their not knowing the meaning of the words, not reading for meaning or making sense, and only attending to certain letters.

General Evaluative

Ten percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 8% in term 2 were of a general evaluative nature. In addition, 3% of their concerns in term l and 10% of their concerns in term 2 were in this category.

Teachers commented on the specific number of miscues made by children and made comparisons among children regarding the number of miscues they made. A few teachers calculated and referred to children's word recognition accuracy, and reference was also made to the levels of specific texts.

Descriptors such as "good," "very well," "fine" and "ok" as well as levels were used to describe Grade 1 children's oral reading. One child was described, for example, as "at the first stage in syllabication (she syllabicates but doesn't make a real word)."

Running Records of Grade 2 Children

Graphic Cues

Results of analyses of teachers' comments and children's miscues are presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 at the beginning of this chapter. As indicated in these tables, teachers frequently commented on Grade 2 children's use of graphic cues in both terms. Thirty-six percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 31% of their positive comments in term 2 were focused on use of graphic cues. In addition, 25% of teachers' concerns in term l and 23% of their concerns in term 2 referred to Grade 2 children's difficulties with graphic cues. In my analysis of Grade 2 children's miscues, I found that they used graphic cues more frequently than other cues with 87% of their miscues in both terms having high or partial graphic similarity to the text.

Teachers frequently commented on visual and graphic similarities between Grade 2 children's miscues and text words and noted the extent of "similarities in letters" or "similar word structure." Sometimes miscues were described as containing some graphic similarity while "no graphic similarity" to text was noted in substitutions such as /thousand/ for /centimeter/. Reasons for lack of visual and graphic similarity included Grade 2 children not being "focused" or "attending to text detail," as well as "look[ing] quickly."

Of all locations, teachers most frequently noted Grade 2 children's use of beginnings of words and substitutions of words with the same beginning letters. Only one comment in each of terms l and 2 referred to difficulty with using word beginnings. Grade 2 children's use of beginning graphic cues was sometimes described in combination with other strategies including guessing and phonics. Teachers commented infrequently regarding Grade 2 children's attention or inattention to middle and ending letters of words although more concerns than positive comments were expressed. Teachers frequently noted use of graphic cues from a combination of locations in term 2, particularly from beginnings and endings of words.

In relation to word recognition, a small number of comments focused on whether substitutions were words and on children using syllabication to "attack unfamiliar words." Teachers also described the extent of omissions which Grade 2 children made when reading as ranging from "not hav[ing]... a lot of omissions" to "omitting pages." Reasons for omissions were believed largely due to children's fluent reading and "... not need[ing] every word if it made sense." While Grade 2 children were sometimes described as reading fluently, they were also noted to make "lots of hesitations" and repetitions. Teachers expressed more comments on the extent and nature of Grade 2 children's sight vocabulary and fluency than on other aspects of word recognition. Differences in sight vocabulary were noted among children and teachers cited specific sight words missed as including color words and pronouns.

Phonic Cues

Teachers did not frequently describe Grade 2 children as effectively using phonic cues. Fourteen percent (term l) and l6% (term 2) of teachers' positive comments were focused on Grade 2 children's use of phonic cues when reading orally. As well, 8% of teachers' concerns in both terms referred to difficulties with phonic cues experienced by Grade 2 children.

When teachers did comment on use of phonic cues, they described Grade 2 children as varying in the amount of phonic cues used from "using phonics mostly" to showing "no evidence of really sounding out words..." A small number of comments focused on using the wrong vowel sound or omitting vowel sounds and sometimes children were described as using phonics in combination with other strategies such as guessing and graphic cues. Occasionally, reasons were cited for Grade 2 children using or having difficulty using phonics. They were noted to sound out when "in trouble" with unfamiliar words and to sometimes have difficulty blending the sounds together, often inserting or adding a consonant(s). Teachers more frequently described Grade 2 children as sounding out the beginnings than other parts of words.

Contextual Cues

As indicated in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, teachers expressed frequent comments and concerns in both terms about Grade 2 children's use of contextual cues. Thirty percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 36% of their positive comments in term 2 described Grade 2 children as using contextual cues. Thirty-four percent of teachers' concerns in both terms were related to difficulties with contextual cues. In my analysis of Grade 2 children's miscues, I found that 31% of their miscues in term l and 24% of their miscues in term 2 had high contextual acceptability. In addition, 27% of their miscues in term l and 33% of their miscues in term 2 indicated use of contextual cues for part of the sentence.

Teachers described four ways that Grade 2 children used contextual cues when reading. Of all types of contextual cues, teachers most often described Grade 2 children's facility and difficulty with using language and text knowledge when reading. Michael's substitution of /waking flea/, for example, was described as "how we talk - we don't say /wakeful flea/." Miscues that sounded like language were described as "syntactically ok." The insertion of /The/ to begin a sentence and "tense changes made for the second miscue to fit with the first miscue" were noted as instances of using text structure information. Grade 2 children also used story structure and schema when reading. However, they were sometimes described as not connecting reading to real language or sounding like language and "... not pick[ing] up the scheme that was used to tell the story."

Second, teachers described the degree to which Grade 2 children made sense when reading. Children were frequently noted to make sense when reading but sometimes their miscues were described as not sounding like language in the whole sentence or only "mak[ing] sense up to a point." Children's substitutions of /how/ for /oh/ and /no/ for /on/, for example, were described as "not making sense." My miscue analysis also indicated that Grade 2 children used contextual cues for part of the sentence 27% to 33% of the time. Closely related to making sense, teachers also described some Grade 2 children's substitutions as "good meaningful substitutions." Again, however, they were noted to often "mak[e] meaning in bits and pieces," using only parts of sentences or texts and to "not read for [or] use meaning."

Third, teachers commented that Grade 2 children sometimes guessed based on the context of the material or their knowledge about the topic or concept. At one point, Ann was believed to insert /tiny/ because she was "using her knowledge of mice (associates mice with tininess)." However, Grade 2 children were also described as sometimes not using contextual clues and unable to "... listen to the context that [they're] reading in" when they made a large number of miscues or were unfamiliar with the context or text concepts.

Fourth, Grade 2 children were frequently described as using, looking at and interpreting picture clues when reading orally, e.g., John used picture clues for the words /scuba diving/, /chimney/ and /climb/. However, Grade 2 children sometimes did not use or read pictures well. It was noted, for example, that Michael was not using picture clues in Brown Bear, Brown Bear or he would have read /a yellow duck, blue horse, purple cat/.

Author's Meaning

Teachers made few comments regarding whether or not children's miscues changed the author's meaning. Only 4% of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 3% of their positive comments in term 2 described Grade 2 children as maintaining the author's meaning and few concerns were expressed (5% in both terms) about changes to the author's meaning. In my analysis of Grade 2 children's miscues, I found that only 19% of their miscues in term 1 and 29% of their miscues in term 2 were consistent with or only partially different from the author's meaning. Hence, most miscues did result in a significant change in the author's meaning.

Although there were few comments in this category, teachers did describe Grade 2 children's miscues as ranging from "no meaning change" to "losing the meaning completely." Substitutions including /a thing/ for /anything/ and /fly/ for /flea/ were described as causing "no change of meaning" or "not a lot of meaning difference" while John's substitution of /up to/ for /up the/ was noted to "mean different things." Over-attending to decoding, the number of "words correct" and ability to maintain fluency throughout the text were hypothesized as reasons for Grade 2 children losing the author's meaning.

Other Factors

Teachers expressed more concerns about child and text factors hindering than supporting Grade 2 children's oral reading. Thirteen percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 8% of their positive comments in term 2 described other factors affecting Grade 2 children's oral reading. Twenty-four percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 30% of their concerns in term 2 referred to other factors.

While teachers gave very few comments about Grade 2 children's involvement, interest and attitude towards oral reading, they frequently commented on the nature of texts as both helping and hindering children's oral reading. Several texts were described as "difficult" for Grade 2 or too difficult for specific children. Teachers believed that the extent to which texts contained familiar, interesting and meaningful context determined children's facility with oral reading. Teachers noted whether texts contained familiar, common, everyday language or more "sophisticated" literary language. Words including /sidestepped/, /wares/, /clamp/ and /drone/, were described as unusual and unfamiliar for some children. In addition to familiarity with text words, teachers commented on the children's familiarity with text phrases and expressions. Phrases such as /few people/ and /I do so love/ were described as not being everyday common language but as "... more literary language."

Teachers also described the structure of text language, text patterns or sentence structure as contributing to oral reading facility. For example, expressions such as /so that he was able not to see/ were described as "almost like a translation." While some texts were described as "... not really having a pattern," other texts such as The Little

Raccoon Who Could were described as providing a "/what if I/ pattern" which children could follow. In addition, some texts were noted to contain few contextual cues to facilitate word recognition and text language was described as sometimes "... getting in the way" of reading through preventing use of contextual skills. Text length was also noted to contribute to difficulty.

Teachers made some comments on the lack and quality of text pictures as contributing to inappropriate contextual clues and inability to recognize certain words. Some texts were described as "very well illustrated," although other pictures were unclear and "...distract[ed]" or contributed to "misinterpretation." For example, teachers noted that "... from the picture in Brown Bear, Brown Bear, it [goldfish] could be an /orange fish/." Teachers also recognized that certain descriptive words such as /beautiful/ are not easily illustrated in text.

In addition to comments on text factors, some general statements were made about Grade 2 children using a variety of strategies including self-correcting and guessing with self-correcting being the most common strategy. Children self-corrected as a result of using phonics, language, reading for meaning and pictorial clues. Teachers described the amount of self-correcting as ranging from "no self-correcting" to "lots" and occasionally noted the specific number of self-corrections.

General Evaluative

Teachers infrequently made general evaluative comments about Grade 2 children as readers. Three percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 6% of their positive comments in term 2 were of a general evaluative nature. Four and 1% of teachers' concerns were of a negative evaluative nature.

Some children were described as "capable" readers while others were noted to "...not pass it." Teachers also used descriptors such as "excellent," "very well," "good" and "low" to describe Grade 2 children's oral reading. Teachers used informal evaluative comments including "lots" and "many" to describe Grade 2 children's number of miscues. They also referred to specific percentages and levels of word recognition on many of the texts and grade expectations were sometimes provided, e.g., when children made "common miscues for Grade 2."

Running Records of Grade 3 Children

Graphic Cues

Results of analysis of teachers' comments are presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 and those for children's miscues are in Tables 5.3 and 5.4. Teachers more frequently described Grade 3 children's difficulty than facility with graphic cues. Of teachers' positive comments, 22% in term 1 and 20% in term 2 referred to use of graphic cues. Thirty-seven percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 29% of their concerns in term 2 focused on Grade 3 children's difficulties with graphic cues. In my analysis of Grade 3 children's miscues, I found that they used graphic cues more often than other cues. Sixty-seven percent of their miscues in term 1 and 73% of their miscues in term 2 had high or partial graphic similarity to words in the text.

Grade 3 children were described as "us[ing] ... visual cues for parts of words" and their miscues were described as "look alikes" or "close to text words." Miscues ranged from being graphically similar to having no similarity. Substitutions such as /When/ for /Then/, /hills/ for /hill/ and /sharks/ for /shocks/ were noted as "visually similar." Miscues described as having "some visual similarity," included /Today/ for /Toad/ and /try/ for /story/. Substitutions such as /and/ for /to/ and /hours/ for /days/ had "no similarity." Children were also noted to reverse letters and to not attend to the length of the word. Reasons given for Grade 3 children's difficulties with using visual cues included reading fast or quickly and not visually attending.

Some teachers commented that Grade 3 children were looking at the beginnings of words and cited examples of attention to word beginnings. Few positive comments were made about processing of cues in the middle or ending of words, but teachers expressed several concerns about children's difficulties with cues at word endings including "suffix difficulty" and omission or substitution of endings. Teachers sometimes noted that Grade 3 children attended to cues from a combination of word locations including beginning and ending or middle and ending.

Concern was expressed about Grade 3 children's word recognition including difficulties with specific words and whether or not substitutions were real words. Fluency was also a focus of teachers' comments. Although some Grade 3 children were noted to read fluently and quickly, teachers also described others as repeating or omitting words and sentences and reading slowly. Grade 3 children were believed to repeat when "... they find it [the word] hard," need to keep themselves "on track," need "a second breath to go on," and when they lost the meaning or were insecure. Reasons given by one teacher for children's omissions included making sense and unnecessary or unfamiliar words.

Phonic Cues

Teachers did not often describe Grade 3 children as using phonic cues when reading. Five percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 15% of their comments in term 2 referred to Grade 3 children's use of phonic cues. Fifteen percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 10% of their concerns in term 2 described difficulties with using phonic cues.

When teachers did comment on phonic cues, they described Grade 3 children as sometimes "attempt[ing] to sound out words" and sometimes "not using phonics, ... not [using] the sound[s]." Specific vowel difficulties included vowel combinations /ea/ and /ei/, short vowels and r-controlled vowels. At times, teachers noted that Grade 3 children used phonics and visual cues together. Of all locations, teachers most frequently referred to Grade 3 children's facility and difficulty with beginning sounds. Teachers also commented that Grade 3 children did not always use beginning sounds and noted specific difficulties with beginning blends, e.g., /cr/ and /fr/, and digraphs.

Contextual

Teachers frequently commented on Grade 3 children's use of contextual cues and more often noted their facility than difficulty with use of contextual cues. As Tables 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate, forty-seven percent of teachers' comments in term l and 2 described Grade 3 children's facility with contextual cues. Twenty-two percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 30% of their concerns in term 2 described contextual difficulties.

In my analysis of Grade 3 children's miscues, I found that 55% of their miscues in term 1 and 39% of their miscues in term 2 had high contextual acceptability.

Of all types of contextual cues, teachers most frequently described Grade 3 children's miscues as fitting in and reflecting "common, familiar language expressions," e.g., substitution of /sled/ for /sleigh/ and "... /go out in the ocean/, I've heard children say this." Grade 3 children often substituted the same part of speech or a syntactic structure they were familiar with, e.g., "put[ting] the verb right after the noun." Unfamiliarity with the grammatical structures used by the author was noted to cause difficulty, e.g., unfamiliarity with the use of "even" as an adverb.

Grade 3 children were also described as using familiar text language and text structures. Some miscues were noted to be caused by "... expecting a different structure from what's there" as children "... carr[ied] on with the language structure or pattern of the text." Some Grade 3 children were described as "not using [their] language for the total sentence," their miscues sounding like language within a phrase or part of the sentence. As described in Tables 5.3 and 5.4, in my miscue analysis, I also found that Grade 3 children sometimes used contextual cues for part of the sentence. Twenty-one percent of their miscues in term 1 and 32% of their miscues in term 2 indicated use of contextual cues in parts of the sentences.

Some teachers described Grade 3 children as making sense or reading for meaning when reading orally. Children made sense by omitting or substituting and inserting their own language that would "go together" with the text. Although less frequently noted, some miscues were described as "... not mak[ing] sense." Reasons for miscues not making sense included "... not trying to get sense" and making a large number of miscues.

More concerns in both terms referred to Grade 3 children's difficulties with reading for meaning than with any other contextual category. Miscues were described as having "lost meaning," as containing "no meaning" and as "not meaningful." Patricia's substitution of /plunked/ for /plucked/ for example, was described as "... not a meaningful word to use there ... you can't /plunk a hanky/."

Author's Meaning

Teachers infrequently commented on whether Grade 3 children's miscues changed, interfered with or lost the author's meaning. Ten percent of teachers' comments in term l and 8% of their comments in term 2 described Grade 3 children as maintaining the author's meaning when reading. Seven percent of their concerns in term l and 13% of their concerns in term 2 involved difficulties experienced in maintaining the author's meaning. In my analysis of Grade 3 children's miscues, I found that 54% of their miscues in term l and 51% of their miscues in term 2 involved no or only a partial change of the author's meaning.

In this category, teachers described a range of meaning change from no change to a loss of meaning. Children were also sometimes described as "in and out of meaning." It was noted, for example, that one child was "inconsistent [in her reading of Caps For Sale] sometimes her miscues resulted in loss of meaning and sometimes no loss of meaning ..." In addition, some miscues were described as "meaningful in the sentence but not in the whole story; while the miscue did not alter meaning in the sentence or page, it ... could later in the context of the whole story."

Other Factors

As noted in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, teachers provided more comments in both terms regarding child and text factors hindering than assisting children's oral reading. Nine percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 6% of their comments in term 2 described other factors assisting children with their oral reading. Seventeen percent of teachers concerns in term l and 18% of their concerns in term 2 referred to other factors hindering Grade 3 children's oral reading.

Teachers infrequently described Grade 3 children's involvement, interest and attitude towards reading, talked about children being careless and about their confidence and expression when reading orally. They expressed more concerns about the nature of the text as interfering with Grade 3 children's oral reading. Several texts including Jack and Ned and Come with Me were described as "easy," "low level" texts while Three Strong Women was described as a "hard passage." Teachers determined text difficulty by the difficulty or familiarity of text words, sentences and passages. Some texts such as The Polar Express were noted to contain words that "... present[ed] no difficulty" while vocabulary such as /bandanna/ and /furrows/in other texts were noted as uncommon words and not in children's vocabulary. Clumsy, confusing or inappropriate sentence structure including use of the article before words other than nouns, ending sentences with /to/ or beginning them with /And/, and compound descriptors were also noted to contribute to text difficulty. Teachers expressed only one concern regarding the nature of text pictures affecting oral reading.

Some Grade 3 children were described as using other strategies when reading including guessing or predicting, reading ahead, risk-taking and self-correcting. Reasons for Grade 3 children self-correcting included "reading for meaning" and realizing when their miscues did not make sense.

General Evaluative

Teachers occasionally described Grade 3 children's miscues in a general evaluative manner. Seven percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 3% of their comments in term 2 were of a general evaluative nature. Only 2% of teachers' concerns were of an evaluative nature. When teachers did provide these types of comments, they described Grade 3 children as having "a few" or "too many" miscues or noted specific numbers of miscues as ranging from "no miscues" to "20 errors." Texts were referred as being on certain word recognition levels and descriptors such as "pretty good," "all right," "ok" and "not serious" were used to evaluate Grade 3 children's oral reading.

Discussion of Results on Running Records

The following section presents comparisons across grades for each of the running record categories identified in this chapter. A summary of teachers' comments on running records is presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 near the beginning of this chapter. Comparisons between teachers' analyses of running records and my analysis of oral reading miscues are also presented. A summary of my miscue analysis is presented in

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 on page 115. Most of the available literature focuses on miscue analysis rather than analysis of running records, and much of this literature dates from the 1960s and 1970s. Hence, while some reference is made to this literature, the main focus of this discussion is on comparisons across grades and between teachers' and my analysis.

Graphic Cues

Although teachers did describe primary children as using graphic cues, their comments in this category were relatively infrequent in comparison with my miscue analysis. According to my analysis, all children used graphic cues more frequently than other cueing systems. Extensive use of grapho-phonic cues by primary children has also been found by other researchers (Clay, 1969; Boettcher, 1977; Rhodes, 1979; Au, 1977). Reasons given by teachers in this study for primary children not using graphic cues included not visually attending to text detail and reading fast.

The percentages of teachers' comments about use of graphic cues increased from Kindergarten to Grade 2. In my analysis, I also found an increase in utilization of graphic cues from Kindergarten to Grade 2, particularly in term l. K. Goodman and Burke (1969); Goodman (1975); Levine (1976) and Kelly, Klein and Neal (1993) reported that as reading develops, graphic cues are used more and non-words are frequently substituted. K. Goodman & Burke (1970) reported increases in use of graphic cues from Grades l to 3. Wixson (1979), Weber (1970b), Biemiller (1970) and Kelly et al. (1993) noted increases over the year in graphically similar substitutions.

Teachers in this study commented more frequently on graphic similarities in word beginnings than in middles or endings. In her summary of research from oral reading studies, Weber (1968) also concluded that the first letter or letters were most frequently used to identify words. More than one-half of Grade 1 children's substitutions were found to have the same first letter and more than one-third of their substitutions had the same first two letters (Weber, 1970b). Teachers in this study described primary children as using graphic cues in combination with other strategies including knowledge of language, phonics, picture clues and guessing.

Phonic Cues

Although infrequent, teachers in this study described primary children as sometimes using phonic cues, particularly beginning sounds. In addition, primary children's utilization of sounds from a combination of locations was sometimes noted with most comments about beginning and ending sounds. Grade 1, 2 and 3 children were noted to confuse long and short vowel sounds, as well as vowels in medial positions, vowel combinations and r-controlled vowels. Teachers also described primary children as using phonic cues in combination with other cues and strategies including graphic cues, pictures, context, language and guessing, with most comments involving graphic cues.

Goldsmith-Phillips (1989) and Strong (1985) have described children's proficiency in decoding as increasing across the grades. The percentage of teachers' comments in this study regarding the utilization of phonic cues also increased from Grade 1 to 2.

Contextual Cues

Teachers commented more frequently on primary children's facility and difficulty with contextual cues than on other cueing systems with more comments focused on facility than difficulty. Teachers described children as using context, concepts and language, making sense, reading for meaning and using picture clues. My analysis also indicated that primary children often used contextual cues although they used these cues less frequently than graphic cues.

Other researchers have found that most readers regardless of age or proficiency rely more heavily on contextual cues than on other types of cues (Lipson & Wixson, 1991; Biemiller, 1970; K. Goodman & Burke, 1970; Clay, 1968; Kolers, 1970; Weber, 1970a). Goldsmith-Phillips (1989) and Wildman and Kling (1978) indicated that Grade 1 children produced contextually similar miscues approximately 30% more frequently than graphically similar miscues. Beginning and less able readers who have not learned to use decoding strategies automatically have been noted to use or over-rely on their knowledge of grammatical structure as a compensatory measure (Stanovich, 1991; Juel, 1991; Leu, DeGroff & Simmons, 1986; Goldsmith-Phillips, 1989).

With the exception of Grade 2 children's running records, teachers' comments regarding the presence of contextual cues increased across the grades. I also noted a slight increase in high contextual acceptability across the grades in term 2, with the exception of Grade 2. Teachers commented more about Grade 2 children's use of graphic cues and seemed more concerned that they were not using pictures, making sense and using language. My analysis indicated that like other primary grades, Grade 2 children's miscues were meaningful in relation to the part of the sentence before or after the miscue but unlike other grades, they were often not meaningful in relation to the whole sentence. Chall (1983a) also noted a de-emphasis on contextual cues at this grade (the Initial Reading or Decoding Stage) and noted that while there is concern for meaning or semantic acceptability, the focus is on developing facility with the alphabetic principle and learning the connection between letters and sounds and between printed and spoken words.

Researchers disagree as to whether the use of contextual cues increases or decreases across the grades. Some researchers maintain that as readers mature, the proportion of syntactically acceptable miscues increases (Au, 1977; K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977; Leslie, 1980; Greene, 1974; Strong, 1985). Englander and Harste (1979) found that Grade 1 and 2 children made greater use of linguistic cues than Kindergarten children, and Christie and Alonso (1980) found that third graders gave more grammatically and semantically acceptable miscues than first graders. Other researchers maintain that reliance on context for word identification decreases as a function of reading development and skill (Stanovich, 1991; Biemiller, 1970 and Weber, 1970a). Grade 6 children's miscues were described as less semantically and syntactically similar to text words than those produced by Grade 2 and 4 children (Goldsmith-Phillips, 1989). Hutson and Niles (1973) reported a decrease from first to third grade in the proportion of syntactically appropriate miscues. Allington and Strange (1987); Cohen (1974/1975); Juel (1980); Stanovich (1980) and Weber (1970a) reported that proficient readers use equal or less amounts of contextual information compared to less proficient readers.

Teachers in this study described primary children's oral reading as affected by their knowledge or familiarity with the topic and concepts, the extent to which they could relate texts to their own experiences, and their familiarity with texts and text language. Sadow (1980) also noted that understanding the ideas that constitute the context determines contextually appropriate miscues, and Rousch (1972) associated lack of prior conceptual knowledge of material being read with more graphically similar miscues and fewer self-corrections.

Of all contextual cues, teachers most frequently described primary children's facility with using their oral language when reading. Children were described as making sense and predicting text language by relying on or substituting their own everyday familiar oral language and common expressions. Other researchers have also found that young readers expect written sentences to conform to the rules of their language (Clay, 1969; Goodman & Burke, 1968; Weber, 1970a; Kelly, Klein & Neal, 1993).

In addition to oral language, teachers in the study noted that primary children often used their familiarity with text or literary language as well as their knowledge of text structure when reading. Children were described as becoming familiar with and following the patterns of text language and text structure. Englander and Harste (1979) and Sadow (1980) also maintained that familiarity of vocabulary and structures affects use of linguistic cues.

Teachers frequently described Kindergarten and Grade 1 children in the study as relying on and interpreting pictures when reading. Reliance on picture clues was noted to vary across the grades and among children with some children not effectively using picture clues and others moving away from reliance on picture clues. Other researchers have also noted that the use of extralinguistic cues or cues external to the reader including pictures, graphs and charts decrease with grade level. Englander and Harste (1979) found that Kindergarten children, for example, tended to use extralinguistic cues more often than Grade 1 and 2 children and more often than linguistic or cognitive cues.

Author's Meaning

Teachers infrequently described primary children as maintaining the author's meaning. My analysis also indicated reading for the author's meaning to be a problem area. I found that 40% to 81% of children's miscues in term l and 49% to 71% of their miscues in term 2 resulted in a change of the author's meaning. Factors noted by teachers to contribute to children's difficulties in maintaining the author's meaning include word recognition difficulties and familiarity with the meaning of text vocabulary, over-attending to decoding and "not connecting" for meaning. Sampson, Briggs and White (1981), also found that while children's basal story miscues were semantically and syntactically acceptable, they often resulted in meaning change. Both the teachers and I noted a slight increase in maintaining the author's meaning from Grade 1 to 3 children's oral reading.

Other Factors

The nature of the child and the text as well as use of other strategies were identified as additional factors affecting primary children's oral reading. Teachers commented more frequently about other factors hindering than facilitating primary children's reading development. The dynamic interplay of factors affecting children's oral reading has also been noted in the literature (Chinn, Waggoner, Anderson, Schommer & Wilkinson, 1993).

The nature of children including their self-confidence, involvement, interest and attitude towards the topic, story or genre was sometimes described by teachers as affecting oral reading. Children's home and previous grade experiences, their exposure to print prior to school entry as well as their level of reading skills in previous grades were also found to affect oral reading. K. Goodman (1964) advised that in order to understand primary children's reading behaviour, one must look not only at the written material but at the reader's language, experience and language training. Simons and Ammon (1989); Sadow (1980); K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1977) and Wixson (1979) have all recognized that miscues are generated from expectations based on the reader's knowledge or schemata of the "real world," amount of text-relevant information brought to the reading task, concepts and background experiences.

Teachers did not describe differences in self-correcting across the primary grades. Adkins and Niles (1985); Christie and Alonso (1980) and D'Angelo (1981) also reported no significant difference in percentage of self-corrections across grades.

Within the Other Factors category, teachers expressed more concerns about the impact of the nature of the texts than other factors on primary children's oral reading. Specific texts were described as easy or difficult for individuals and primary children generally. Other researchers have also found the average number of miscues to vary with the difficulty of texts (Christenson, 1968; Kibby, 1979). However, some researchers (Christie & Alonso, 1980; Gonzales & Elijah, 1975; Schlieper, 1977 and Hutson & Niles,

1973) have found that complexity or difficulty level of passages had little effect on the quantity of primary children's miscues.

Although teachers in the study did not discuss indepth or draw conclusions regarding the effect of text difficulty on specific cueing systems, texts containing a large number of unfamiliar words, sentence structures and concepts were noted to hinder use of contextual and meaning cues. Several other researchers have found that text difficulty contributes to differences in the quality of patterns of primary children's miscues and reading strategies. Contextual and graphic appropriateness of miscues were noted to vary according to passage difficulty (Sadow, 1980; Kibby, 1979; Williamson & Young, 1974; Biemiller, 1970 and Rhodes, 1979). For example, Hutson and Niles (1973) found that the proportion of Grade 1 children's syntactically appropriate miscues decreased as passages became more difficult while for Grade 3 the proportion of syntactically appropriate miscues increased as text difficulty level increased. Biemiller (1979), Sadow (1980) and Blaxall and Willows (1984) noted that children produced fewer contextually acceptable miscues on difficult texts. Christie and Alonso (1980) found that difficult texts often resulted in more attention given to graphic cues. In contrast some researchers have found that children's use of meaning cues increased as text level and difficulty increased as noted in Kelly, Klein and Neal's (1993) study with Grade 1 children.

Teachers in this study frequently described primary children's familiarity with text language as affecting their oral reading. Some texts were described as containing familiar, common everyday language while other texts were described as containing more difficult literary language. Some vocabulary was described as not meaningful or not at children's grade level. Englander and Harste (1979) also recognized familiarity with vocabulary as aiding utilization of linguistic cues. Texts with a high density of difficult words have been found to contribute to meaning change miscues (Chinn et al., 1993).

In addition to familiarity with text words, teachers commented on children's familiarity with text phrases and expressions. The difficulty of some words and phrases was described as due to the extent to which texts contained meaningful contextual clues or supports for the recognition and meaning of words. Ammon et al. (1990) also noted that unnatural language as observed with primerese or basals resulted in greater reliance on bottom-up processing. Simons and Ammon (1989) found that more natural texts reduced the number of good Grade 1 readers' graphically based miscues.

Teachers in the study described the structure of text language as affecting children's oral reading. Some texts were described as containing unusual sentence structure, unconventional grammar, redundant language and compound descriptors. Weber (1970a) and K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1977) also noted that miscues are affected by the style of sentences or grammatical constraints on sentences. Some texts used in the study were described as having a strong story line and structure with patterns and repetitions to facilitate oral reading while other texts were noted to lack story structure or a pattern. K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1994) also explained that short texts were more difficult to obtain cues regarding style and meaning with a single miscue having more effect on the meaning of short passages. Short language sequences have been recognized by other researchers as more difficult, providing limited cues to build a sense of style or meaning (K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977; Sampson, Briggs &

White, 1981). Short, simple sentences were found to result in unnatural linguistic structures inconsistent with readers' expectations and knowledge regarding common structures (Simons & Ammon, 1989). Ammon, Simons and Elster (1990) found a significantly higher proportion of syntactically appropriate miscues that preserved meaning on rewritten or more natural language versions. Rhodes (1979) noted that the cumulative and repetitive pattern of texts permitted better predictions of author's language, content and cue utilization. Simons and Ammon (1987) and Bridge, Winograd and Haley (1983) noted that Grade 1 children recognized more words when reading predictable texts than vocabulary controlled texts. Rhodes (1979) and Simons and Ammon (1987) reported that more predictable language and content encouraged more syntactic and semantic cue utilization.

Depending on the grade, the amount of concern expressed by teachers regarding the effect of picture clues on oral reading varied, with more comments and concerns at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 levels. The absence of pictures in texts for certain words and components of texts was described as contributing to reading difficulty. Some pictures were described as providing appropriate, strong and clear contextual clues while other picture clues were noted to lack clarity and not really help word recognition or support the text. In some cases, pictures were noted to distract or hinder children from constructing meaning and contribute to misinterpretation.

Chesnov's (1994) analysis of Grade 1 basals also found that illustrations do not always relate to context, and Manzo and Leginza (as cited by Chesnov, 1994) described illustrations in Grade 1 basals as offering little language stimulation. However, Chesnov

(1994) also found that illustrations tied together and emphasized parts of the story including characters, objects and locations and provided clues for understanding characters' words and actions. While Tierney and Cunningham (1984) maintain that there is no evidence that pictures aid comprehension, Beck, McKeown and McCaslin (1981) found that Grade 1 and 2 children's story comprehension was assisted when the content of pictures concurred with the print.

Primary children were described as using other strategies when reading including self-correcting, and guessing or risk-taking. Teachers described more commonalities than differences in the self-corrections of Kindergarten and Grade 2 and 3 children in term l and in-self-correcting and risk-taking among all primary grades in term 2. Reasons for self-correcting included reading for meaning, making sense, using context, picture clues, phonics and language. Reasons given for not self-correcting included lack of understanding of the meanings of text words, not reading for meaning or making sense and only attending to certain letters. Teachers described some primary children as guessing or predicting unknown words while others were described as afraid to guess or take risks. Reasons for not taking risks or guessing included lack of familiarity with the story and being afraid to guess or not knowing what to do.

Conclusion

In summary, more commonalities than differences were found in primary children's running records. Teachers frequently noted primary children's facility with contextual cues and infrequently commented on their use of graphic cues and ability to retain the author's meaning. In addition, teachers described similar components of cuing systems across grades. Other factors including the nature of the child, text and strategies were found to hinder all primary children's oral reading with few differences reported across grade levels.

Like the teachers, I found that primary children frequently did not retain the author's meaning, and, although less frequent than graphic cues, I also noted that primary children often utilized contextual cues. While teachers most frequently described primary children as using contextual cues, I found that graphic cues were the most frequently used cuing system.

Some developmental trends were noted in primary children's oral reading. We found an increase in utilization of graphic cues from Kindergarten to Grade 2, a slight increase in maintaining the author's meaning across the primary grades and an increase in utilization of contextual cues across the grades (with the exception of Grade 2).

CHAPTER 6

Results and Discussion of Oral and Written Retellings

This chapter is organized into three main sections. The first section is comprised of four sub-sections in which teachers' descriptions and my analysis of primary children's oral retellings are presented for each grade from Kindergarten to Grade 3. The second section consists of three sub-sections in which teachers' descriptions and my analysis of primary children's written retellings are presented for Grades 1 to 3. In the last section, similarities and differences in teachers' descriptions of oral and written retellings across the primary grades as well as similarities and differences between teachers' and my analyses of oral and written retellings are discussed and related to the literature.

Oral Retellings for Kindergarten Children

The following results are based on oral retellings for Kindergarten children following teachers' reading of texts in both terms and following independent reading of texts in term 2. Because of the small sample size, oral retellings following independent reading of texts in term l are not included. Results of the analysis of teachers' comments for all four grade levels are presented in Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3; results of my analysis of children's retellings are presented in Tables 6.4 and 6.5.

Story Structure.

As indicated in Tables 6.1 and 6.3, story structure was the most frequent focus of teachers' comments in both terms when they described Kindergarten children's recall of stories heard. Over half of teachers' positive comments in term 1, 40% of their positive comments in term 2 and nearly half of their concerns in term 2 were related to story

Table 6.1

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Teachers

Grade	K		K		3	
	P=50	N=13	P=78	N=40	P=27	N=32
Term	1		2		1	
Categories						
Story Structure						
Sequence	+16%	-8%	+17%	-18%	+18%	-6%
Story	+4%	-15%	+9%	-20%	+4%	
Sense/Fluency	+20%	-23%	+26%	-37%	+22%	-6%
Total: Sequence						
Location						
Beginning	+12%		+1%	-3%	+7%	-13%
Middle/Events	+10%		+4%	-3%	+7%	-6%
Ending	+2%			-5%		
Combination	+12%		+9%			
Total: Location	+36%		+14%	-10%	+15%	-19%
Total: Story Structure	+56%	-23%	+40%	-48%	+37%	-25%
Text Focus						
Details	+6%	-15%	+17%	-15%	+7%	-22%
Text	+4%		+7%		+7%	
Language/Pictures	+10%	-15%	+23%	-15%	+15%	-22%
Total: Text Focus						
Beyond Text Focus						
Own Language	+4%		+4%		+7%	-22%
Personal Reaction	+2%		+7%		+4%	
Total: Beyond Text	+6%		+10%		+11%	-22%
Comprehension						
General	+2%		+4%		+11%	-3%
Understanding/Gist	+8%		+4%		+4%	
Summarizes		-15%				-3%
Main Ideas/Lesson					+4%	
Problem				-15%		-9%
Accuracy	+10%		+10%	-15%	+19%	-15%
Total: Comprehension						
Other Factors						
Nature of Child		-23%	+4%	-3%	+11%	-12%
Nature of Text						-6%
Nature of Task	+16%	-23%	+8%	-18%	+4%	-6%
Total: Other	+16%	-46%	+12%	-20%	+15%	-25%
General: Evaluative	+2%		+5%	-3%	+4%	

Table 6.2

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Children in Term 1

Grade	1		2		3	
	P=3	N=5	P=65	N=90	P=73	N=24
Categories						
Story Structure						
Sequence	+33%		+6%	-13%	+5%	-17%
Story Sense/Fluency			+3%	-4%	+3%	-4%
Total: Structure	+33%		+9%	-18%	+8%	-21%
Location						
Beginning			+17%	-9%	+25%	-17%
Middle				-9%	+10%	-12%
Ending			+9%	-4%	+3%	
Combination						-4%
Total: Location			+26%	-22%	+37%	-33%
Total: Story Structure	+33%		+35%	-40%	+45%	-54%
Text Focus						
Details			+18%	-36%	+11%	-17%
Text Language	+33%		+5%		+1%	
Total: Text Focus	+33%		+23%	-36%	+12%	-17%
Beyond Text Focus						
Own Language			+3%		+7%	
Reaction					+3%	
Total: Beyond Text			+3%		+10%	
Comprehension						
Overall Understanding/Gist			+8%	-3%	+7%	-13%
Summarizes			+9%		+8%	
Problems/Resolution			+5%	-1%	+7%	
Main Ideas		-20%			+5%	
Total: Comprehension		-20%	+22%	-4%	+27%	-13%
Other Factors						
Nature of Task		-20%	+1%	-3%	+1%	
Nature of Text		-40%	+3%	-8%		
Nature of Child			+3%	-6%	+4%	-8%
Total: Other		-60%	+8%	-17%	+5%	-8%
General: Evaluative	+33%	-20%	+9%	-2%		-8%

Table 6.3

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Oral Retellings of Texts Read by Children in Term 2

Grade	K		1		2		3	
	P=5	N=9	P=36	N=51	P=79	N=87	P=128	N=36
Category								
Story Structure								
Sequence			+8%	-8%	+9%	-3%	+10%	-6%
Story Sense/Fluency		-22%	+3%	-8%	+2%	-3%	+3%	
Total: Sequence		-22%	+11%	-16%	+11%	-7%	+12%	-6%
Location								
Beginning			+11%	-2%	+19%	-6%	+9%	-8%
Middle/Events			+3%		+4%	-10%	+6%	-3%
Ending					+6%	-5%	+3%	-6%
Combination	+20%		+8%		+2%		+2%	
Total: Location	+20%		+22%	-2	+31%	-21%	+20%	-17%
Total: Story Structure	+20%	-22%	+33%	-18%	+42%	-27%	+32%	-22%
Text Focus								
Details	+20%	-22%	+14%	-2%	+18%	-31%	+9%	-31%
Text/Book Language		-11%	+5%		+1%		+5%	
Interpreting Pictures			+5%				+1%	
Total: Text Focus	+20%	-33%	+25%	-2%	+19%	-31%	+15%	-31%
Beyond Text Focus								
Own Language					+1%	-5%		
Personal Reaction			+8	-2%	+1%	-1%	+10%	-11%
Total: Beyond Text			+8	-2%	+2%	-6%	+10%	-11%

Comprehension								
General	+20%		+5%	-10%	+15%	-2%	+7%	-3%
Understanding			+5%		+2%	-2%	+9%	
Summarizing			+11%	-2%	+2%	-1%	+7%	-7%
Main Ideas/Lesson				-6%	+1%	-2%	+2%	
Accuracy					+5%		+2%	
Problems &								-3%
Resolutions							+2%	-3%
Reasons	+20%		+21%	-18%	+27%	-8%	+29%	-8%
Word Meaning								
Total: Comprehension								
Other Factors								
Nature of Text		-22%	+5%	-18%	+1%		+2%	-14%
Nature of Task					+5%	-18%	+4%	-3%
Nature of Child	+20%	-22%	+6%	-37%		-9%	+2%	-8%
Total: Other	+20%	-44%	+11%	-55%	+8%	-27%	+8%	-25%
General: Evaluative	+20%		+3%	-6%		-2%	+5%	-3%

Table 6.4

Researcher's Analysis of Location of Information in Children's Oral Retellings Across Grade Levels

	Beginning		Middle		Ending	
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 1	Term 2	Term 1	Term 2
Kindergarten						
Teacher Reading		68%		61%		71%
Independent Reading		88%		67%		50%
Grade 1						
Independent Reading		65%		34%		56%
Grade 2						
Independent Reading	62%	59%	55%	66%	50%	42%
Grade 3						
Teacher Reading	50%		50%		25%	67%
Independent Reading	71%	70%	70%	56%	50%	

Table 6.5

Researcher's Analysis of Clausal Units in Children's Oral Retellings Across Grade Levels

Categories	Verbatim Recall/ Paraphrasing	Combining	Generalizing	Inferring	Elaborating	Erroneous
Kindergarten						
Teacher Reading						
Term 2 (n=241)	63%	5%	6%	17%	0%	9%
Independent Reading						
Term 2 (n=23)	83%	0%	9%	4%	4%	0%
Grade 1						
Independent Reading						
Term 2 (n=95)	69%	6%	6%	7%	4%	8%
Grade 2						
Independent Reading						
Term 1 (n=97)	45%	10%	12%	17%	14%	1%
Term 2 (n=146)	51%	5%	4%	8%	11%	11%
Grade 3						
Teacher Reading						
Term 1 (n=256)	51%	4%	5%	11%	24%	5%
Independent Reading						
Term 1 (n=75)	46%	12%	9%	19%	9%	6%
Term 2 (n=311)	52%	8%	9%	16%	14%	1%

structure. Teachers talked about recall of information from specific story locations and also about the sequence in which information was recalled. Overall, teachers noted more facility with story structure in term 1 and more difficulty in term 2, probably indicating teachers' different or higher level expectations in term 2.

Teachers frequently commented on the presence of sequence in retellings following teachers' reading of texts. A sequential retelling was described as one showing "perfect order" and "good story sense." However, teachers also expressed concerns regarding Kindergarten children's lack of sequence and cohesion in retellings. More comments were expressed regarding Kindergarten children's difficulty with sequence in both terms than their facility with it. Teachers noted that Kindergarten children frequently gave a listing rather than telling the story and gave confusing retellings that lacked story sense or cohesion.

According to the teachers, Kindergarten children more frequently recalled information from story beginnings than from other locations in term 1. Information recalled from story beginnings generally involved identification of main characters and/or descriptions of the characters. In my analysis of retellings in term 2 (see Table 6.4), I found that Kindergarten children recalled 88% of the information in story beginnings following independent reading of texts and 74% of beginning text information following teachers' reading of texts.

Slightly fewer comments were given by teachers about information recalled from the middle of stories. These comments were mostly of a general nature focusing on recall of main events although specific main events recalled were also cited. Teachers also noted that Kindergarten children recalled ideas from a combination of beginnings, middles and/or endings of stories. In my analysis, I found that following independent reading of texts, Kindergarten children recalled 67% of information in the middles of texts. Following teachers' reading of texts, they recalled 61% of this information.

Teachers rarely described Kindergarten children's recall of endings (only 2% of positive comments term l). However, in my analysis of retellings following teachers' reading of texts, I found that Kindergarten children recalled 71% of information from the endings of texts heard and 50% of this information following independent reading.

Text Focus

Ten percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 23% in term 2 were focused on Kindergarten children's reliance on text although teachers also expressed concerns in this area with 15% of their negative comments in both terms referring to difficulty with utilization of text in retellings. As the data in Tables 6.1 and 6.3 indicate, recall of details and text language largely comprised teachers' descriptions of Kindergarten children's reliance on texts.

Teachers' descriptions of the extent to which Kindergarten children recalled details from passages heard ranged from remembering a lot of details to omitting some minor details and not paying attention to or giving details. Teachers also described retellings following independent reading of texts in term 2 as lacking details. The amount of details recalled appeared to depend on the text used.

In my analysis of retellings following teachers' reading of texts as well as independent reading of texts in term 2, recalls appeared to be constrained by the texts.

Sixty-eight percent of clauses recalled in term 2 following teachers' reading of texts and 83% of clauses following independent reading of texts involved specific text content. The information recalled was either exactly like the text or involved synonyms or paraphrasing of specific referents within a single clausal unit in the text.

Teachers also commented on children's recall of book language although these comments were less frequent than those referring to recall of details. Their comments ranged from children "us[ing] a lot of book talk" or "language from the book" to "not includ[ing] lots of expressions and words from the story." Teachers also cited specific examples of text language including dialogue. Very few teachers' comments indicated that children were reading or remembering pictures.

Beyond Text Focus

Teachers only commented on Kindergarten children's ability to move beyond texts following independent reading of texts and all of these comments were positive. They talked about children "transferr[ing] everything into [their] own language" and giving personal reactions through using their own experiences. In my analysis of oral retellings in term 2 (Table 6.5), 26% of clausal units following teachers' reading and 17% of units following independent reading involved Kindergarten children moving beyond the text information to summarize, infer or construct their own stories.

Comprehension

In retellings following teachers' reading of texts, between 10% and 20% of teachers' comments involved the extent to which Kindergarten children were comprehending what they heard. As the data in Table 6.1 and 6.3 indicate, teachers described Kindergarten children's comprehension as showing general understanding as well as facility with more specific comprehension skills such as summarizing, recalling the main idea and accuracy.

Although a small sample of comments, one teacher did refer to general understanding of texts read independently. Following teachers' reading of texts, only a few comments focused on Kindergarten children's general understanding of the story and whether or not they had the gist of the story.

Although there were only two comments in term 1 following independent reading of texts, both focused on Kindergarten children's difficulty in recalling the main idea. Following teachers' reading of texts, several comments referred to instances of summarizing. Summarized retellings were described as "concise" or "the story in a nutshell." In my analysis, 6% of recall units following teachers' reading of texts and 9% of recall units following independent reading of texts involved Kindergarten children in generalizing, summarizing or recalling main ideas.

Several teachers in term 2, following teacher reading of texts, referred to lack of accuracy in retellings. Inaccuracies generally involved characters and their actions. In my analysis, 9% of clausal units in Kindergarten children's retellings following teachers' reading of texts involved errors.

Other Factors

Although the categories noted above were reflected in most teachers' comments on Kindergarten children's retellings of passages heard, 16% of their comments in term 1 and 12% of their comments in term 2 involved other factors affecting the quality of retellings.

These factors included the nature of the child, the nature of the task and the nature of the text. As well, 46% of teachers' concerns in term l and 20% of their concerns in term 2 about retellings following teachers' reading of texts identified other factors. More comments involved negative than positive impacts of these factors.

Within the Other Factors category teachers most frequently described the nature of the child as affecting oral retellings. Kindergarten children's language was described as having a "natural flow" and as creative, colourful and rich. However, nearly one-quarter of teachers' concerns in term 1 and one-fifth of their concerns in term 2 involved within-child factors hindering retellings of stories heard, with most concerns focusing on Kindergarten children's language. Children's retellings were noted to be told in short, choppy sentences and immature language. In addition to oral language difficulties, other within-child factors noted to impact retellings included confidence, interest and attention span.

Teachers also expressed concerns following independent reading of texts regarding the impact of text difficulty on Kindergarten children's retellings. Some texts were described as fairly difficult for kindergarten children to recall the sequence and were more like a "listing" than containing a "little plot."

Teachers explained many of Kindergarten children's retelling difficulties as due to lack of familiarity with what was involved in the retelling task or inexperience with oral retelling. Teachers' approaches were also believed to affect retellings. The extent to which teachers read the texts used for retellings to the class or gave sufficient time for several readings was believed to contribute to the quality of retellings.

General Evaluative

Teachers sometimes used adjectives such as "fine," "good" and "well advanced" to describe Kindergarten children's retellings.

Oral Retellings for Grade 1 Children

Oral retellings for Grade 1 children were collected in terms l and 2 following independent reading of texts but because of the small sample of teachers' comments in term l, results will be presented only for those comments in term 2. No oral retellings were obtained following teachers' reading of texts. Results of the analysis of teachers' comments are presented in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 and of my analysis of children's retellings in Tables 6.4 and 6.5. These tables are presented near the beginning of the chapter.

Story Structure

Teachers commented most frequently of all categories on first-grade children's awareness of story structure in retellings. Thirty-three percent of teachers' positive comments and 18% of their negative comments were related to story structure. More comments were expressed overall regarding facility with story structure than difficulty with it.

Fewer comments were made regarding children's ability to give sequential retellings than to recall information from specific story locations. Concerns tended to focus on lack of sequence or disjointedness in retellings. Non-sequential retellings were described as more of a listing and as lacking story sense or "... not relat[ing] the parts of the text to the whole text to tell a story."

Within the category of Story Structure, teachers commented most frequently regarding first-grade children's recall of information from specific locations, with more comments on text beginnings than other locations. The majority of these comments referred to the identification and recall of characters. In my analysis related to story structure, I found that first-grade children recalled 65% of information in the beginnings of texts. Only one teacher's comment referred to the presence of information from the middle of stories in retellings. However, in 8% of their comments, teachers noted the presence of information from a combination of locations. In my analysis of story structure, first-grade children recalled 34% of information from the middle of stories. Teachers did not comment on the extent to which first-grade children included story endings in their retellings except in combination with other story locations. However, I found that first-grade children recalled 56% of information from the endings of texts.

Text Focus

Twenty-five percent of teachers' positive comments were related to children's recall of information from the text. As Tables 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate, Text Focus was comprised of recall of details and text language as well as interpretation or reading of pictures. In my analysis, I also found that first-grade children relied on or were constrained by texts in their retellings. Sixty-nine percent of clauses recalled were primarily exact text sentences with some substituting of words or paraphrasing. An additional 6% involved combining or synthesizing of text information across sentences.

Teachers gave more positive than negative comments regarding the presence of details in retellings. They also noted the amount of details in retellings as ranging from "got it all there" to "sketchy" and omitting details. Teachers identified specific omitted details. For example, when retelling Through the Deep Snow: Barney's Story one child was noted to "omi[t] that Terry carried the flashlight and they came to get him."

Teachers did not comment frequently on Grade 1 children's recall of text language but when they did, they indicated that children "used words from the story" and identified some specific text words recalled. Few teachers mentioned Grade 1 children's use of pictures in retellings although they did observe a child's recall of illustrated characters and nouns.

Beyond Text Focus

Teachers commented the least of all categories on instances of Grade 1 children going beyond texts in their retellings. Only 8% of their positive comments referred to children using their own knowledge and experiences rather than the text information in retellings. Teachers also expressed few concerns (only 2%) about children not going beyond reliance on texts in their retellings. In my analysis, I found that Grade 1 children utilized their own knowledge or schema in 17% of their recall units. In 7% of these units they used their own knowledge to infer by adding information or filling in gaps. In even fewer recall units (4%) Grade 1 children used their background knowledge and experiences to move beyond texts to construct their own stories.

Comprehension

Teachers commented on the extent to which comprehension was evident in retellings. Twenty-one percent of teachers' positive comments were placed in this category. Teachers also expressed concerns (18%) regarding the extent to which first-grade children were not comprehending. As the data in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 indicate, teachers described both general and specific aspects of Grade 1 children's comprehension.

A limited number of teachers' positive comments referred to first-grade children's general understanding of texts, the extent to which the children "knew what [they] read" and "got the gist or basics of the story." Teachers expressed most concern in the Comprehension category regarding the extent to which first-grade children's retellings did not show understanding or meaning.

Specific aspects of comprehension observed by teachers in Grade 1 children's retellings included understanding of main ideas and ability to summarize. It was noted, for example, when children understood the main idea in Miss Nelson is Missing that "*Miss Nelson was Miss Viola Swamp dressed up*." Few concerns were expressed regarding absence of main ideas in retellings. Only occasionally did teachers describe the extent to which first-grade children summarized information in their retellings. In my analysis of retellings, 6% of Grade 1 children's recall units showed summarizing and awareness of main idea.

Some teachers focused on inaccuracies particularly about characters and their actions in first-grade children's oral retellings. Teachers commented, for example, that "Barney wasn't really lost in the story [Through the Deep Snow: Barney's Story] and Terry didn't carry him back." In my analysis, I also found that Grade 1 children made some errors (8% of recall units) in retellings. Inaccuracies consisted mostly of errors in text recall rather than inappropriate use of background knowledge.

Other Factors

Eleven percent of teachers' comments focused on other factors which they believed affected the quality of retellings. As Tables 6.2 and 6.3 indicate, the Other Factors category included the nature of texts, psychological or within-child factors and nature of the retelling task. Teachers more frequently expressed concerns that these factors interfered with effective retellings than that they facilitated recall. There were more concerns about this category than all other categories.

In comparison with text factors, more comments and concerns involved psychological or within-child factors. Teachers believed that Grade 1 children's personalities, utilization of personal experiences, interest in the task, attention span and reading ability affected the quality of their retellings. One child's retelling of The Runaway Bunny, for example, was believed to be hindered because she was "not a risk taker."

In relation to within-child factors, teachers noted that aspects of oral language including maturity of vocabulary and being able to use all the parts of speech affected ability to effectively communicate in retellings and to "handle language and let it do things." Oral retellings were also affected by children's use of pronouns including ability to tell the story from a character's point of view. Teachers felt that sometimes retellings reflected whether Grade 1 children had the text experiences to relate to the text information. Teachers were also concerned that Grade 1 children may not have utilized the experiential information that they did have. Teachers noted that children's reading strategies such as utilization of pictures and reading for meaning also helped determine quality of retellings. Grade 1 children's success with the task of retelling was also believed to be affected by their interest and excitement in the task as "you only throw back what sticks with you."

Some teachers also expressed concern regarding the difficulty of the texts used for retellings. Some texts were described as "too easy" and teachers indicated the need for texts to be "a little more intricate." However, other texts were viewed as "too difficult" or too long and containing a lot of information especially when "retelling all at once." Problems in retellings were also attributed to lack of story structure, inappropriateness of text content and absence of good pictures. The extent to which "good pictures" accompanied texts and the appropriateness of the text content for each grade were believed to contribute to ease in retelling.

General Evaluative

Teachers made general evaluative comments about the amount of information recalled and also used adjectives such as "good ... not fancy" and "very immature" to describe the quality of retellings.

Oral Retellings for Grade 2 Children

Oral retellings for Grade 2 children were collected in terms 1 and 2 following independent reading of texts. Because only one child gave retellings following the teacher's reading of texts and the sample was small in both terms, reference will be made only to oral retellings following independent reading of texts. Results of the analysis of teachers' comments and children's retellings are presented in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 respectively.

Story Structure

Teachers commented most frequently of all categories on the extent to which Grade 2 children's retellings reflected story structure. Thirty-five percent and 42% of their positive comments in terms l and 2 respectively referred to facility with story structure in retellings. The category into which most concerns were placed in term 1 also involved story structure. Forty percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 27% of their concerns in term 2 involved difficulties with story structure. As the data in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 indicate, comments regarding story structure involved location and sequence.

Some teachers noted when Grade 2 children gave sequential retellings. Sequential retellings were viewed as those which have the "events of story in sequential order," where "organization and thoughts follow each other," which "contain the beginning, middle and ending of stories read," and are "fluent" with proper use of connectors. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding difficulty with sequence, particularly in term l. Non-sequential retellings were described as disjointed, as lacking a structure, plan or story schema and as a listing rather than a cumulative sequence.

In comparison with sequence, teachers more frequently described the location from which second-grade children recalled information in stories, and also expressed some concern regarding lack of recall of information from specific locations of stories. Of all locations, teachers commented most frequently in both terms on the presence of beginnings in retellings. My analysis indicated that Grade 2 children recalled 62% of information from beginnings in term l and 59% in term 2.

In addition to the presence of beginnings, the quality of beginnings was described in terms such as "good introduction/beginning" or "the opening is fine." Teachers also noted that Grade 2 children's retellings ranged from mentioning, identifying or listing characters to describing their actions. Inclusion of main characters was also indicated. Grade 2 children's reference to setting in their retellings was less frequently mentioned.

Several teachers voiced concerns about children's difficulties in recalling information from text beginnings. They made general comments regarding the absence of beginnings in retellings and sometimes cited specific examples of omitted information including characters' actions. It was observed, for example, that one child "missed the initial part ... omits what the mouse did (the real beginning)" when retelling Mouse in a House. Teachers also noted that Grade 2 children sometimes confused the characters.

Teachers gave few comments regarding the presence of middles in Grade 2 children's retellings in both terms. It was noted, "this seems to be common of Grade 2s .... they give the opening and ending and when pressed for details will give some of the middle." The amount of information omitted ranged from omission of some information in the middle resulting in a "very vague middle" to omission of all the text middle as when children "jumped from beginning to conclusion." My analysis showed that Grade 2 children recalled some information from the middles of many texts. They recalled 55% of information from the middles of texts in term 1 and 66% in term 2.

Teachers made slightly more comments about Grade 2 children's recall of endings than middles. I found that 50% of endings in term 1 and 42% of endings in term 2 were recalled. Teachers noted the absence of endings and their descriptions of the quality of endings ranged from "good ending" to "confusing at ending."

Text Focus

The extent to which Grade 2 children included text information in their retellings was the focus of 23% of teachers' positive comments in term l and 19% of their positive comments in term 2. Teachers also noted when Grade 2 children were not focusing on text and in both terms, more concerns than positive comments were expressed regarding recall of text. Thirty-six percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 31% of their concerns in term 2 referred to difficulties with recalling text. As Tables 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate, most comments involved the presence or absence of details.

In many of their retellings, Grade 2 children were described as giving lots or many of the details. Teachers did not describe the nature of details recalled although it was noted that details were often recalled at a literal level. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding the omission of details particularly details from the middle of stories. Some retellings were noted to be "scanty" or "brief" with "not many" or "no added details." Specific details omitted were cited and details omitted were described as sometimes necessary for clarity and understanding of the story.

A few teachers in term l noted the extent of text language used by Grade 2 children in their retellings. The extent of text language used in retellings ranged from "using some text language" to "telling directly what was in the text and stick[ing] to the story." Sometimes the latter involved using dialogue.

My analysis (Table 6.5) indicated that 45% of clauses recalled by Grade 2 children in term 1 and 51% of clauses recalled in term 2 involved recall of the specific text with some paraphrasing. In addition, 10% of clauses in term 1 and 5% of clauses in term 2 showed combining of text information across sentences.

Beyond Text Focus

Although infrequently mentioned, teachers noted that Grade 2 children used their own language in retellings and examples of children's own language were mentioned. A few teachers' comments focused on difficulty with oral expression. Examples of difficulties included the following observation of a child's retelling of Caps For Sale, "*whatever he done* - hard to express himself." Only one comment regarding personal reactions in retellings was given.

In my analysis, 17% of Grade 2 children's recall units in term 1 and 8% of their recall units in term 2 showed them to be making inferences about texts. In addition, they used their own knowledge to elaborate on text information; 14% of the clausal units in their retellings were of this type in term 1 and 11% in term 2.

Comprehension

Twenty-two percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 27% in term 2 were related to children's comprehension. Only 4% in term 1 and 8% in term 2 of their negative comments indicated concerns regarding lack of comprehension. Clearly, more comments were related to facility than difficulty with comprehension for Grade 2 children. As Tables 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate, teachers noted when Grade 2 children showed "general understanding of the story" and commented on specific aspects of comprehension including summarizing, main idea and identification of the problem.

Several teachers described Grade 2 children's "general overall understanding" of texts or the extent to which they retold enough information to show they understood "the basic idea of the story." Teachers' comments regarding specific aspects of Grade 2 children's comprehension in term 1 were largely focused on the extent to which they could summarize, give a "synopsis" or "concise" retelling. A few comments were also made regarding the presence or absence of main ideas in retellings. In my analysis, 12% of children's recall clauses in term 1 and 4% of their clauses in term 2 indicated summarizing and generalizing of texts.

Teachers did not comment very often regarding Grade 2 children's recall of problems. In addition to general comments regarding identification of main problems, specific problems recalled were mentioned. Rarely did teachers note second graders' absence of the problem when retelling.

Other Factors

Eight percent of teachers' positive comments in both terms described other factors which affected Grade 2 children's retellings. As Tables 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate, these factors included the nature of task, the text and the child. Most of the concerns expressed by teachers in term 2 (27%) fell into this category as did 17% of their concerns in term 1.

Few teachers' comments were related to within-child factors affecting retellings and there were more concerns than positive comments about within-child factors. Teachers did refer to the impact of interest, shyness and lack of background experiences on retellings. They hypothesized that unfamiliarity with text vocabulary or with the meaning of text words contributed to retelling difficulties. Teachers also commented on the nature of children's oral language and discrepancies between reading ability (including decoding and comprehension ability) and quality of retellings.

Particularly in term 2, teachers more frequently noted that difficulty with retelling may be due to lack of familiarity with the task of retelling and of what constitutes a retelling. Children's improvement in retellings was associated with their becoming "more familiar with doing retellings." Because of lack of familiarity with the retelling task, children sometimes were observed to not consider the listener and to "assume that everybody else knows what [they're] talking about." Teachers described the retelling task as daunting for some Grade 2 children, often requiring them "to remember too much." Teachers also hypothesized that for some Grade 2 children oral abilities may not be a strength, that they gave more information in written retellings than oral retellings. Teachers' approaches were also believed to affect Grade 2 children's retellings. Teachers' reading of texts prior to retelling, for example, was believed to assist some children with oral retelling.

Although less frequent than comments about the nature of the task, teachers did note several features of texts that affected the quality of retellings including the genre of texts used, structure of texts and familiarity of content. In relation to the genre of texts used, some children were observed to "[do] better with narrative details" while other children were observed to experience more difficulty with "traditional text[s]." Retellings were also affected by the difficulty and challenge of texts used. Texts which were "literal level stories" and required no inferencing were considered "easy books for Grade 2." Difficult texts were described as containing a lot of information, e.g, A Dark, Dark Tale contained "many characters and colors." In relation to text structure, some teachers noted that Grade 2 children experienced difficulty with texts containing "different kind of language patterns than [they are] used to in [their] speech." Grade 2 children were also observed to find it difficult to comprehend and recall texts that contained "short lines" or "list[ings]."

General Evaluative

Nine percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 2% of their concerns in both terms were of a general evaluative nature. Teachers' evaluative comments included adjectives such as "very good" and "poor" to describe the quality of retellings.

Oral Retellings for Grade 3 Children

Oral retellings were available for Grade 3 children in both terms following independent reading of texts and in term 1 following teachers' reading of texts. Results of analysis of teachers' comments on children's retellings are presented in Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 respectively; results of my analysis of children's retellings are presented in Tables 6.4 and 6.5.

Story Structure

In retellings following independent reading and teacher reading of texts, teachers most frequently described the extent to which third-grade children showed "a sense of story structure (beginning, middle and ending)." Forty-five percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 32% of their comments in term 2 involved children's utilization of story structure in retelling stories read independently. Thirty-seven percent of teachers' positive comments focused on story structure in retellings of stories heard. Teachers also expressed frequent concerns regarding the extent to which Grade 3 children utilized story structure in their retellings. Fifty-four percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 22% in term 2 referred to lack of awareness of story structure in retellings of stories read independently. In retellings following teachers' reading of texts, 25% of teachers' concerns involved story structure.

Teachers frequently noted the presence of sequence in third graders' retellings. Some comments were general observations that retellings contained "events told in sequence," were partially in sequence or had "some information in order." Some Grade 3 children were described as knowing how to connect events in sequence through the use of appropriate connectors. Not all comments regarding Grade 3 children's sequencing of ideas were positive. Teachers noted that sometimes retellings were only partially sequential and they sometimes gave specific examples of incorrect sequence. Grade 3 children also sometimes experienced difficulty in using appropriate connectors including time words like "later," "in a few minutes" and over-used "*and*" as well as "*then.*"

Location of information in stories was of paramount importance to teachers when describing retellings of stories children both read and heard. Grade 3 children's recall of beginnings of texts was most frequently described of all locations following both independent and teachers' reading of texts. Similarly, in my analysis, Grade 3 children frequently recalled beginnings; they recalled at least 70% of beginnings in both terms following independent reading of texts.

Teachers made general comments regarding the presence of beginnings and indicated that Grade 3 children included characters, setting, purpose and problem from the beginnings of texts. Recall of characters was one of the most frequently mentioned components of beginnings in retellings following both independent and teachers' reading of texts. Teachers noted the number of characters included, the specific characters recalled, inclusion of both main and minor characters, and descriptions of characters' roles and development in children's retellings. Children knew, for example, "that the steward and servants [in The Sultan's Perfect Tree] were under the Sultan and had to do what he wanted," and "recognize[d] change [development] in the sultan, e.g., that initially *he wanted everything to be perfect* but gradually realizes that *everything doesn't have to be perfect but at least it's alive*." However, teachers also indicated difficulties in recalling text beginnings following independent and teachers' reading of texts. Sometimes characters were omitted, and in retellings following teachers' reading of texts, children frequently did not describe characters or their roles.

In retellings following independent reading of texts, teachers' comments in relation to the middle of stories consisted mostly of descriptions regarding the amount and nature of events recalled by Grade 3 children. The amount of events recalled was described as ranging from a "sufficient number" to "a lot" or "all" of the events of the story. Teachers sometimes described the events recalled as the main, important or essential events. Teachers also noted that Grade 3 children omitted middles in retellings following independent and teachers' reading of texts. They commented that sometimes important events and ideas were omitted that connect and hold the story together. In my analysis, 70% and 56% of middles of texts which children read independently were recalled and 50% of middles of texts read by teachers were recalled.

Few teachers' positive comments in both terms following texts read independently referred to the nature of endings recalled. I found that 50% and 67% of endings of texts which were read by children were recalled while 25% of endings of texts read by teachers were recalled.

Text Focus

As indicated in Tables 6.2 and 6.3, twelve percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 15% of their positive comments in term 2 regarding retellings of texts read independently referred to Grade 3 children's dependence on or utilization of text information. In retellings of texts heard, 15% of teachers' positive comments referred to text focus. Teachers also expressed concerns about this area. Seventeen percent of their concerns in term 1 and 31% of concerns in Term 2 involved lack of utilization of texts in retellings of passages read independently. In retellings of texts read by teachers, 22% of teachers' negative comments focused on lack of text information. More teachers' comments reflected difficulty with text focus than facility with it.

In my analysis, Grade 3 children seemed to rely more heavily on the text when retelling than on their own knowledge and experiences. Fifty-eight percent of recall clauses in term 1 and 60% in term 2 for texts read independently demonstrated verbatim recall or paraphrasing of text information. Recall of text information was evident in 55% of clauses in term 1 for texts heard. In addition, children sometimes combined words across sentences in texts. Following independent reading of texts, 12% of clauses in term

1 and 8% of clauses in term 2 indicated combining of text units across sentences. Four percent of recall clauses showed combining of text units across sentences following teachers' reading of texts.

Within the category Text Focus, teachers commented most frequently regarding the nature and amount of details in retellings following independent reading of texts. They described the amount of details recalled as ranging from "enough" to "lots" or "very many" and commented that Grade 3 children recalled important details, descriptive details and details about characters. Descriptive details recalled from The Polar Express, for example, included *"went up mountains and over ice ... dressed in red... bells off the harness*." However, more concern was expressed regarding lack of details in retellings than any other sub-category of concerns in term 2 following texts read independently and in term 1 following texts heard. Teachers commented on the amount and nature of details omitted. Sometimes details omitted were "extra" details or examples. Some omissions involved details regarding the actions or descriptions of characters while other omissions were considered essential to the story.

Grade 3 children's reliance on the language of texts was not as frequently commented on as utilization of details in retellings following independent reading of texts. Teachers did sometimes note that Grade 3 children used the exact text words and phrases in their retellings which were "very straight forward and directly from the book." Teachers also observed that the text language recalled usually consisted of adjectives and quotations.

Beyond Text Focus

Ten percent of teachers' positive comments in both terms about retellings of texts read independently referred to Grade 3 children going beyond reliance on texts. Eleven percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 focused on instances of children utilizing their own experiences and schema in retellings of texts heard.

Sometimes teachers described Grade 3 children in a general manner as using their "own words" or language in retellings of texts both read and heard. Other teachers provided specific examples of children's own language including words, phrases and sentences instead of the text. For example, when retelling Little Raccoon Who Could, a child retold the text "... when you have extra time" as "... *when your chores were all finished*."

Grade 3 children frequently described the feelings and responses of characters. Sometimes these feelings were directly stated in the text and at other times children inferred the feelings of characters. Teachers also observed other evidence of children's involvement with the text including laughing while retelling and stating that they liked the book. However, teachers sometimes observed that Grade 3 children did not give reactions to texts or draw inferences from what they read or heard. They indicated that retellings were not told "...at an interpretive or inference level" and cited examples of omissions of inferences.

In my analysis, I found several instances of Grade 3 children using their background knowledge to construct their own stories. Nine percent of clausal units recalled in term 1 and 14% of clauses recalled in term 2 following independent reading of texts as well as 24% of clauses following teachers' reading of texts indicated that Grade 3 children created additions to texts read or heard. In retellings following independent reading of texts, 19% of clausal units in term 1 and 16% of clauses in term 2 indicated children using their knowledge schema to make inferences. Eleven percent of clauses following teachers' reading of texts showed Grade 3 children inferring or filling in gaps.

Comprehension

Teachers frequently noted the extent to which Grade 3 children were indicating comprehension in their retellings. Twenty-seven percent of their positive comments in term l and 29% of their comments in term 2 following independent reading of texts referred to evidence of comprehension. Nineteen percent of teachers' positive comments following teachers' reading of texts described Grade 3 children's comprehension. Teachers also commented when lack of comprehension was indicated in retellings. Thirteen percent and 8% of their concerns regarding retellings of texts read independently focused on lack of comprehension. Teachers frequently commented (15% of negative comments) about difficulty with comprehension in retellings following teachers' reading of texts. However, more comments were expressed regarding facility with comprehension than difficulty with it.

Several teachers described children's retellings as showing "overall understanding of story." They also noted when children "recogniz[ed] the meanings of words encountered in reading and listening." However, teachers also observed that Grade 3 children sometimes experienced difficulty with general understanding of texts. For instance, one child's retelling of A Whale of a Summer was analyzed as follows, "I don't think he realized how important the trip was; the boy and his family came from Ontario. They were all very excited about the whale watching expedition."

Teachers also described specific aspects of Grade 3 children's comprehension including their ability to summarize and generalize, to find the main idea, problem and resolution and to interpret or infer. They made general comments regarding the presence or absence of main ideas or essential points in retellings and cited examples of main ideas. Teachers' general comments acknowledged that Grade 3 children "summarize information," and they described retellings as "concise" and as "get[ting] right to the point ... that's it in a nut shell." Teachers also referred to specific summaries given by children as in the summary statement of The Sultan's Perfect Tree that *"Everything doesn't have to be perfect. At least it's alive*." In my analysis, 9% of Grade 3 children's clausal units in retellings of texts read independently and 5% of their clausal units in retellings of texts heard were of a summarizing and generalizing nature.

In relation to children's recall of the problem and resolution, general comments were made such as "knows how the problem is resolved" and "builds up to the problem and resolution." Specific instances of recognition of the problem were also provided.

Teachers expressed some concerns regarding lack of accuracy in retellings following teachers' reading of texts and most of these concerns involved confusion among characters and inaccuracies in characters' actions. In my analysis of Grade 3 children's retellings following independent reading of texts, only 6% of clausal units in retellings in term 1 and 1% of clauses in term 2 were erroneous. Five percent of clauses in retellings following teachers' reading of texts showed inaccuracies in recall.

Other Factors

In retellings of texts children read, 8% of teachers' positive comments in term 2 and 5% of their positive comments in term 1 made reference to the nature of the child, text and task factors contributing to retelling success. In retellings of texts heard, 15% of teachers' positive comments involved other factors. Teachers also talked about other factors which they believed hindered successful retellings. In retellings following independent reading of texts, 8% of teachers' negative comments in term 1 and 25% of their negative comments in term 2 reflected these concerns. In retellings following teachers' reading of texts, 25% of teachers' concerns were about other factors interfering with successful retellings.

Teachers did not comment frequently regarding within-child factors affecting the quality of retellings although attitude, interest in the subject and memory were mentioned. Within the Other Factors category, teachers expressed most concerns in term 1 regarding the nature of Grade 3 children's oral language including lack of oral language facility or fluency and clarity of pronouns.

Teachers expressed most concerns in term 2 regarding the difficulty of texts read by children. Teachers made general comments regarding the difficulty of texts and also indicated that certain texts particularly those which lend themselves to making inferences were more appropriate for the retelling task. Retelling difficulties were believed to be affected by the extent to which text language was "alive" and "natural." Level of difficulty of vocabulary, lack of clarity within texts and uninteresting content were viewed as hindering effective retellings. Teachers also noted that length of story and the amount of information contained in texts affected retellings.

While only a few teachers' positive comments and concerns following independent reading of texts focused on the nature of the task, more attention was given to this factor when describing retellings of texts read by teachers. The most frequent observation was that while sometimes Grade 3 children understood the importance of considering the listener, especially with respect to clarifying characters, other Grade 3 children assumed the reader was familiar with the story.

General Evaluative

Five percent of teachers' positive comments in term 2 following independent reading of texts and 4% of their comments following teachers' reading of texts were of a general evaluative nature. Eight percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 following independent reading of texts were also of a general nature. For example, one child's retelling of A Whale of a Summer was described as "brief" and as "not retold independently."

Written Retellings for Grade 1 Children

Written retellings for Grade 1 children were available only in term 2 following teacher reading of texts. Results of the analysis of teachers' comments are presented in Table 6.6 and results of my analysis of children's retellings are presented in Tables 6.7 and 6.8.

Table 6.6

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Grade 1, 2 and 3 Children's Written Retellings of Texts Read by Teachers

Grades	1		2		2		3	
	P=29	N=6	P=75	N=43	P=122	N=49	P=83	N=67
Term	2		1		2		1	
Categories								
Story Structure								
Sequence	+3%	-17%	+9%	-5%	+9%		+5%	-6%
Story Sense	+7%		+5%		+1%	-8%	+4%	-6%
Total: Sequence	+10%	-17%	+15%	-5%	+10%	-8%	+8%	-12%
Location								
Beginning	+3%		+12%		+11%	-2%	+11%	-3%
Middle/Events	+6%		+5%	-5%	+4%	-4%	+6%	-6%
Ending			+4%	-30%	+8%	-22%	+5%	-7%
Combination	+7%			-2%				
Total: Location	+17%		+21%	-37%	+23%	-29%	+22%	-16%
Total: Story Structure	+27%	-17%	+36%	-42%	+33%	-37%	+30%	-28%
Text Focus								
Details	+17%		+8%	-12%	+24%	-14%	+6%	-7%
Text Language	+14%		+5%	-2%	+11%		+6%	
Total: Text Focus	+31%		+13%				+4%	
				-14%	+35%	-14%	+16%	-7%

Comprehension								
Understanding/Gist	+7%		+10%		+2%		+6%	-4%
Main Idea					+1%	-4%	+2%	-9%
Summarizes	+3%		+1%	-5%			+6%	-10%
Lesson								-1%
Problems			+16%		+2%		+8%	-4%
Accuracy		-17%			+1%	-2%	+2%	-7%
Total: Comprehension	+10%	-17%	+27%	-5%	+6%	-6%	+24%	-35%
Beyond Text Focus								
Own Language			+8%				+1%	
Reaction/Response			+3%		+1%	-6%	+4%	-4%
Interpretation/Inferencing				-7%	+4%	-6%	+13%	-4%
Total: Beyond Text Focus			+11%	-7%	+5%	-12%	+18%	-8%
Other Factors								
Nature of Text	+3%		+3%		+1%	-2%		
Nature of Task				-26%	+4%	-12%	+6%	-12%
Nature of Child	+7%	-67%	+9%	-7%	+8%	-6%	+2%	-6%
Total: Other Factors	+10%	-67%	+12%	-33%	+13%	-21%	+8%	-19%
General: Evaluative	+21%		+1%		+8%	-10%	+4%	-2%
Total: General: Evaluative	+21%		+1%		+8%	-10%	+4%	-2%

Table 6.7

Researcher's Analysis of Clausal Units in Children's Written Retellings Across Grade Levels

Categories	Verbatim Recall/ Paraphrasing	Combining	Generalizing	Inferring	Elaborating	Erroneous
Grade 1						
Teacher Reading						
Term 2 (n=54)	61%	6%	9%	9%	6%	9%
Grade 2						
Teacher Reading						
Term 1 (n=87)	29%	3%	22%	20%	15%	10%
Term 2 (n=)	64%	14%	1%	8%	12%	2%
Grade 3						
Teacher Reading						
Term 1 (n=)	52%	4%	6%	5%	28%	5%

Table 6.8

Researcher's Analysis of Location of Information in Children's Written Retellings of Passages Heard Across Grade Levels

	Beginning		Middle		Ending	
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 1	Term 2	Term 1	Term 2
Grade 1		63%		74%		25%
Grade 2	57%	71%	59%	60%	50%	38%
Grade 3	69%		52%		30%	

Story Structure

Twenty-seven percent of teachers' positive comments about Grade 1 children's written retellings were related to their recall of story structure. Teachers described recall of information from different locations of stories and utilization of story sense and sequence. More comments were related to facility than difficulty with story structure.

Teachers described story sense as sounding like a story through the inclusion of characters' responses and examples. A sufficient amount written was also believed to contribute to a sense of story. Few teachers' positive comments referred to retellings as being sequential and only one concern was expressed regarding sequencing difficulties.

The majority of teachers' positive comments regarding text structure referred to location of information recalled. Teachers commented more frequently regarding Grade 1 children's recall of middles and combinations of locations than beginnings or endings. Only one comment focused on recall of beginnings of texts. In my analysis of written retellings, Grade 1 children recalled 63% of information from beginnings and 74% of information from middles of stories heard. A number of teachers' positive comments were direct statements about when Grade 1 children recalled information from a combination of locations. For example, one teacher indicated that a child had a good sense of story - opening, middle and closing. Teachers made no reference to Grade 1 children's recall of story endings separately. In my analysis of written retellings, only 25% of endings of stories heard were included in written retellings. Teachers did not express any concerns regarding Grade 1 children's failure to include information from specific story locations in their retellings.

Text Focus

Thirty-one percent of teachers' positive comments were indications that Grade 1 children relied on texts in their retellings. No concerns were expressed regarding difficulty with utilizing texts in retellings. As Table 6.6 indicates, teachers described text focus as recall of text details and language. In my analysis, I found that Grade 1 children relied heavily on texts in their written retellings. Sixty-one percent of clauses included were exact text sentences with some substituting of words or paraphrasing. An additional 6% of clauses recalled indicated combining of information across text sentences.

A little over half of the text focus comments described the details recalled as ranging from "includ[ing] all the happenings ... [or] details" to including "... many details." Teachers also noted the amount of text language or vocabulary recalled in Grade 1 children's retellings and referred to specific examples of text words and vocabulary recalled.

Beyond Text Focus

Teachers did not comment on the extent to which Grade 1 children went beyond the text in their written retellings. Similarly, in my analysis I found that Grade 1 children infrequently utilized their own knowledge or schema, with 9% of clauses involving inferencing and 6% indicating utilization of knowledge and experiences to move outside texts to reconstruct their own stories.

Comprehension

Ten percent of teachers' positive comments dealt with general understanding and specific aspects of Grade 1 children's comprehension with most of teachers' positive comments in this category referring to Grade 1 children's general understanding of texts heard through retelling the "gist" or a "good part of the story." One comment was related to concern about the accuracy of a child's retellings of story events. In my analysis, 9% of the clauses included in written retellings were inaccurate. Similarly, only one teacher comment referred to an instance of summarizing, and in my analysis, 9% of clauses recalled showed Grade 1 children to be summarizing and generalizing as they engaged in written retellings.

Other Factors

Teachers described other factors including the nature of the child and text which they believed were affecting the quality of retellings. Ten percent of teachers' comments fell into this category. As Table 6.6 indicates, teachers identified the nature of the child as the most frequent factor affecting the quality of retellings. More concerns than positive comments were expressed regarding other factors.

The majority of teachers' positive comments were focused on Grade 1 children's memory and listening skills as within-child factors affecting retellings. Teachers noted the extent to which retellings indicated listening and "a good memory." Most teachers' concerns about within-child factors were related to children's written language which they believed affected quality of retellings. Children's inconsistent utilization of pronouns, punctuation and complete sentences were noted.

Although few teachers' comments involved the nature of texts, teachers did note that certain texts such as The Napping House were "easier to retell" and that the presence of pictures helped determine text difficulty.

General Evaluative

Twenty-one percent of teachers' comments consisted of adjectives and references to the amount of text recalled. Teachers used adjectives such as "excellent," "great" and "wonderful" to describe retellings.

Written Retellings for Grade 2 Children

Teachers evaluated Grade 2 children's written retellings following teacher reading of texts in both terms. No retellings following children's independent reading of texts were evaluated. Results of analysis of teachers' comments are shown in Table 6.6 on page 189. Results of my analysis of Grade 2 children's written retellings are presented in Tables 6.7 and 6.8.

Story Structure

Teachers commented on story structure more frequently than most other categories in both terms. Thirty-six percent of teachers' comments in term 1 and 33% of their comments in term 2 referred to components of story structure including sequence and location. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding the absence of awareness of story structure in retellings, with most concern in both terms involving the extent to which Grade 2 children were attending to information in specific locations. Forty-two percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 37% of their concerns in term 2 referred to difficulty with story structure in written retellings. Teachers expressed more concerns than positive comments regarding story structure.

Teachers sometimes noted the presence and absence of sequence and story sense in Grade 2 children's retellings. They described retellings as "sequential" or having "... the important events of the story in sequence..." They also observed that Grade 2 children achieved sense of story through "connected" and "fluent" retellings and utilization of connectors such as "so," "after," and "awhile." Another way in which Grade 2 children achieved a sense of story was through organizing their retellings around themes as noted, for example, in children's organization of the story [Bear] "around finding food and sleeping" and "the bear's growth from dependence to independence." When teachers expressed concern about sequence and story sense, they were mostly concerned about the absence of cohesiveness in retellings and noted that children sometimes "... just ma[de] a list of happenings instead of tying it all together." Lack of cohesiveness was often attributed to lack of proper connectives.

In comparison with story sense and sequence, teachers more frequently noted Grade 2 children's recall of information from specific story locations. Recall of beginnings was most frequently noted of all locations in both terms. As indicated in Table 6.8 my analysis also revealed that Grade 2 children frequently recalled beginnings in both terms; 57% and 71% of information from the beginnings of texts was recalled. Teachers noted that Grade 2 children's beginnings in written retellings sometimes consisted of listings, descriptions and examples of characters and their problems. However, teachers did not as frequently note the recall of setting in Grade 2 children's retellings.

Teachers did not comment often regarding Grade 2 children's recall of information from the middle of stories. In contrast, my analysis indicated that Grade 2 children recalled 59% and 60% of middles of texts heard in terms 1 and 2 respectively. Teachers noted the presence or absence of middles and described middles as comprised of details and events. At times the presence of text middle was noted in combination with other story structure locations as observed when a child "follow[ed] the story [Bear] through from beginning, to middle to ending."

Teachers rarely described Grade 2 children's recall of story endings and expressed more concerns about lack of recall of information from story endings than from other locations. Teachers noted that Grade 2 children missed the solution or conclusion in their written retellings. Several reasons were given for Grade 2 children not finishing their retellings. It was believed that sometimes they got "bogged down" trying to recall the entire story and lacked sufficient time. My analysis also indicated that Grade 2 children experienced more difficulty recalling endings than other story parts. They recalled 50% of endings in term 1 and 38% of endings in term 2.

Text Focus

Recall of text language and details comprised teachers' descriptions of text focus in written retellings of Grade 2 children. Thirteen percent of teachers' comments in term 1 and 35% of their comments in term 2 referred to instances of reliance on texts in retellings. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding Grade 2 children's lack of reliance on texts in retellings; 14% of teachers' concerns in both terms were about difficulties with text focus in retellings. My analysis indicated that 32% of clauses recalled by Grade 2 children in term 1 and 78% of clauses recalled in term 2 involved recall of specific text with some paraphrasing. Three percent of clauses in term 1 and

14% of clauses in term 2 showed combining of text information from two or more sentences.

Teachers made general comments regarding children's use of book language, noting that they often recalled text conversation or dialogue. In both terms, teachers commented regarding the amount of details included and omitted in retellings. Details recalled and omitted consisted of important information about the characters including their feelings and reactions. It was observed, for example, that when retelling The Magic Fish, a child omitted "important [details] to the story, e.g., that all her requests escalated ... [and] did not give the person's reaction that the fisherman goes to each day - he simply tells what the fisherman did."

Beyond Text Focus

Teachers infrequently described instances of children going beyond texts in their retellings through using their own language and giving personal reactions or feelings. Eleven percent of teachers' comments in term l and 5% of their comments in term 2 were placed in this category. Teachers also expressed little concern regarding the absence of a beyond-text-focus in retellings. Only 7% of teachers' concerns in term l and 12% of their concerns in term 2 involved the absence of information beyond the text. In contrast, in my analysis I found that 20% of clausal units in term l and 8% of clauses in term 2 indicated inferencing and adding information to the text. Fifteen percent of clauses in term l and 12% of clauses in term 2 indicated that Grade 2 children had created their own adaptations to texts heard.

In term l teachers cited specific instances of Grade 2 children using their own language or giving a reaction or feeling when retelling. For example, one child was noted to express his feelings for the bear in his retelling of Bear, e.g., "... *crying his heart out* and from the pictures we get a feeling for the bear when he couldn't catch salmon." However, some concern was expressed that Grade 2 children did not give a response, feeling or inference and often retold the literal details of the story.

Comprehension

Twenty-seven percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 6% in term 2 referred to Grade 2 children's comprehension as evidenced in retellings. Teachers expressed few concerns in both terms regarding absence of comprehension; 5% of teachers' concerns in term l and 6% of their concerns in term 2 noted lack of comprehension in retellings. As Table 6.6 illustrates, teachers described both general understanding and specific aspects of comprehension.

Teachers noted that Grade 2 children's retellings indicated a good overall understanding of stories heard, particularly in term l. Retellings were described as having the gist or idea of the story, and specific examples of recall of the gist of stories were given. In addition to descriptions of Grade 2 children's general understanding of stories, teachers also talked about specific aspects of comprehension noted in retellings including understanding of problems, summarizing, main idea and accuracy. Teachers made general comments about children's identification of the characters and their problem situation and also cited examples of problems found in retellings. Some Grade 2 children also included the resolution of problems in their retellings.

Teachers sometimes referred to Grade 2 children's lack of summarizing and noted specific missing components of summaries in retellings. In my analysis, 22% of clauses recalled in term 2 showed Grade 2 children to be summarizing and generalizing as they produced written retellings. Teachers also expressed some concern regarding absence of the main idea and lesson in retellings and cited examples of omissions. Only in two instances did teachers question the accuracy of Grade 2 children's written retellings and both of these involved questions about the accuracy of characteristics of the queen in The Magic Fish. In my analysis of Grade 2 children's written retellings, 10% of clauses in term 1 and 2% of clauses in term 2 showed inaccuracies in comprehension.

Other Factors

Twelve percent of teachers' comments in term 1 and 13% of their comments in term 2 focused on other factors which they felt were positively affecting the quality of Grade 2 children's retellings. As Table 6.6 illustrates, these factors include the nature of the child, nature of the text and the nature of the written retelling task. In addition, teachers expressed concerns regarding the impact of other factors on the quality of written retellings. Thirty-three percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 21% of their concerns in term 2 involved these other factors. More comments were expressed regarding negative than positive impacts of other factors on written retellings.

Teachers noted the extent to which Grade 2 children's written retellings reflected "good control of language" including appropriate use of mechanics, e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization and complete phrases and sentences. They did not express many concerns regarding inappropriate written language in retellings.

Teachers expressed more concerns regarding the nature of the task than any other factor. They believed that sometimes children did not understand what was required in a retelling task and instead attempted to retell the entire story, often resulting in incomplete retellings. Another difficulty was that sometimes the reader was not considered as noted in lack of delineation of the characters. Teachers' approaches, including the amount of time given to complete the retelling task, were believed to affect the quality of retellings. Teachers also observed that some Grade 2 children found writing difficult and were not as interested in written as oral expression.

General Evaluative

One percent of teachers' comments in term 1 and 8% of their comments in term 2 were adjectives including "good" and "fair" to describe the general quality of Grade 2 children's retellings. Ten percent of teachers' concerns in term 2 were general evaluative adjectives related to the quality of retellings. Teachers also noted the progress in retellings over the year within a child and among children. Finally, teachers evaluated retellings in terms of grades and ability as when one child's retelling of The Valentine Bears was described as "early Grade 1 writing."

Written Retellings for Grade 3 Children

Written retellings were available only in term 1 following teacher reading of texts. No retellings following independent reading of texts were evaluated. Results of analysis of teachers' comments are presented in Table 6.6 on page 189. Results of my analysis of written retellings are presented in Tables 6.7 and 6.8 on pages 191 and 192.

Story Structure

Thirty percent of teachers' positive comments focused on Grade 3 children's awareness of story structure in written retellings. Location of information recalled, story sense and sequence comprised teachers' descriptions of story structure with most comments on location. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding Grade 3 children's limited awareness of story structure. Twenty-eight percent of teachers' concerns involved the absence of story sense, sequence and/or information from specific story locations in retellings, again with most concerns focused on story locations.

In relation to sequence and story sense some Grade 3 children's retellings were described as "includ[ing] the structure of the story" while other retellings lacked a plan for retelling the story resulting in retellings that "[didn't] lead anywhere." Some retellings were described as in sequence while other events were observed to be out of sequence or "not well connected." For example, it was noted that when retelling Maxie one child "doesn't connect going out to get the milk, getting locked out and needing to get the superintendent."

Of all story structure locations, teachers commented most frequently about beginnings. Similarly, my story structure analysis indicated that Grade 3 children recalled 69% of beginnings. Teachers made general statements regarding the presence of beginnings, commented on recall of characters, including descriptions and actions of characters and the presence of setting and problems in children's written retellings. Teachers did not express many concerns regarding difficulty with beginnings in retellings but occasionally noted the absence of characters or character traits. For example, they commented that a child "... omit[ed] who owned the magic drum" when retelling The Magic Drum and "... [didn't] stress his [Chibi's] talents" when retelling Crow Boy.

There were fewer comments on the presence of middles in retellings, although some teachers commented on the amount of events recalled and omitted from text middles. Events recalled were described as the main ones and those "that stick out." Teachers also observed that children sometimes "giv[e] a skeletal sketch" and teachers sometimes noted specific examples of events omitted. In my analysis, Grade 3 children recalled 52% of middles of texts.

A few teachers' comments were focused on the presence and absence of endings in retellings. Adjectives such as "good" were sometimes used to describe endings recalled while other retellings were described as "not finished." Similarly, in my story structure analysis, Grade 3 children recalled only 30% of the endings of texts heard.

Text Focus

Sixteen percent of teachers' positive comments referred to reliance on texts in retellings. As Table 6.6 indicates, comments regarding text focus included observations about literal recall of details and text language. Teachers did not express many concerns regarding utilization of texts in retellings (only 7% of teachers' concerns). More comments were related to facility than difficulty with using texts in retellings. My analysis indicated that 52% of clauses included in retellings were exact text sentences with some paraphrasing. An additional 4% of clausal units indicated combining of information across text sentences.

Several teachers' comments were related to Grade 3 children's use of text language in retellings. Some children were noted to retell using "exact text language" and other children "pick[ed] out text phrases" when retelling.

Teachers also commented on the amount of details recalled in written retellings and noted that Grade 3 children often recalled the main details. Teachers expressed some concerns regarding lack of or too many details in retellings and identified specific details and main parts of retellings that were omitted. Teachers described some Grade 3 children's retellings as indicating literal understanding of texts and following the same pattern as the text.

Beyond Text Focus

Eighteen percent of teachers' positive comments referred to instances of Grade 3 children going beyond texts through using their own language, giving a reaction, feeling, interpretation or inference. Teachers expressed very few concerns (only 8%) regarding the absence of a beyond-text focus in retellings. In my analysis, I found that while only 5% of clauses indicated inferencing and filling in gaps in the text, 28% of clauses showed Grade 3 children using their knowledge and experiences to move outside of texts to reconstruct their own stories.

Teachers noted that sometimes Grade 3 children gave individual interpretations or made inferences. Teachers also made some comments on the presence of responses or reactions in Grade 3 children's written retellings and referred to instances where children put their "own slant on things." For example, when retelling Crow Boy, a child was noted to give her own interpretation that Chibi was "*afraid of the teacher*." They noted that sometimes Grade 3 children identified with and recognized the feelings of characters, retelling the text like the story happened to them. Teachers also observed that sometimes Grade 3 children gave their own story or included part of their own story in retellings. They expressed few concerns about Grade 3 children not giving their own interpretation or point of view, although they did observe that sometimes Grade 3 children did not give a personal response or reaction, did not put themselves into the story or tell how the characters felt in their retellings.

Comprehension

The nature of Grade 3 children's comprehension as evidenced in retellings was more frequently commented on than most other categories. Twenty-four percent of teachers' positive comments referred to evidence of comprehension in retellings. Teachers also expressed most concerns of all categories regarding the absence of comprehension in retellings. Thirty-five percent of teachers' concerns referred to difficulties in comprehension as indicated in written retellings.

Some teachers' comments were general statements referring to Grade 3 children's retellings as indicating understanding or a sense of the story. Teachers also expressed concerns about inaccuracies in retellings and in my analysis 5% of clauses recalled were erroneous. Comments focused on specific examples of inaccuracies or misunderstandings about characters, their descriptions and actions. For example, one child's retelling of How Drufus the Dragon Lost his Head was noted to "... describ[e] Drufus as a prisoner but he didn't need rescuing - he misunderstood this part."

Teachers also noted summarizing in retellings, and in my analysis, 6% of clauses recalled indicated that Grade 3 children involved summarizing and generalizing about texts heard. The majority of teachers' comments referred to summarizing as "being able to extract and summarize the essentials" or getting "right into the problem." Sometimes they described the amount of summarizing and referred to the absence of summarizing in retellings and to the quality of summaries.

Teachers described main ideas as the "crux," "problem," "big picture" or "main part" of the story. More comments focused on omission than presence of main ideas in retellings.

Teachers also focused on the extent to which Grade 3 children recognized the problem and solution in their retellings. Some children were described as hinting at the solution while others were noted to clearly state it. However, teachers also referred to lack of inclusion of problems and their resolutions in retellings as when retelling Maxie, a child "... doesn't say how the problem got solved - the events that solved the problem; she touches on it with Mrs. Trueheart but doesn't go into it."

Other Factors

Eight percent of teachers' positive comments referred to other factors affecting the quality of Grade 3 children's retellings, and 19% of their concerns involved other factors contributing to retelling difficulties. As Table 6.6 indicates, other factors included the nature of the retelling task and the nature of the child. More concerns than positive comments were expressed regarding other factors.

Most positive comments in the Other Factors category were related to the nature of the task or teachers' approaches to the written retelling task. The quality of children's retellings was described as dependent on the directions and expectations of the teacher as well as whether or not children had access to or were familiar with the texts. Twelve percent of teachers' concerns referred to difficulties with the retelling task including children's misunderstanding of the retelling task as requiring retelling of the whole story. Teachers concluded that because of children's efforts to retell entire texts, retellings were often unfinished "... because there's too much to write about." Another difficulty experienced by Grade 3 children with the retelling task was their misunderstanding that the reader is familiar with the text resulting in lack of clarification of language such as pronouns. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding children's written language and style used in retellings. Their language structure was sometimes described as confusing and unclear.

General Evaluative

Four percent of teachers' comments were of a general evaluative nature. Teachers used general evaluative descriptors or adjectives such as "good" to describe Grade 3 children's retellings.

Discussion of Results on Oral and Written Retellings

Teachers described common reading behaviors across the primary grades as well as specific reading behaviours which were more frequently observed in oral and written retellings at one or more primary grades. Results of analysis of teachers' comments across levels are shown in Tables 6.1 to 6.3 for oral retellings and Table 6.6 for written retellings. Summaries of my analysis of children's oral and written retellings are presented in Tables 6.4, 6.5 and Tables 6.7 and 6.8 respectively. Teachers' observations and my analysis were frequently in agreement regarding primary children's retellings.

Story Structure

Story structure in oral and written retellings was a frequent focus of teachers' comments and concerns. In oral retellings, this was particularly true for Grade 2 and 3 children following independent reading of texts and for Kindergarten children following teachers' reading of texts.

Within the category of Story Structure throughout the primary grades, teachers commented more frequently regarding the location than sequence of information recalled. Teachers expressed most concern, for example, of all three Story Structure sub-categories regarding the extent to which children were not recalling information from specific locations. There were minor fluctuations across grades and terms but overall, ability to recall information from the beginnings of stories was frequently mentioned by teachers at all primary levels, especially Grade 2 and 3. Johnson (1970) also noted that certain information units in a text are better recalled than other units. However, most researchers have reported recall of information from all three parts of stories - beginning, middle and ending (Dreher & Singer, 1980; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Farr et al., 1990).

There was considerable similarity between my analysis and the teachers' interpretation of children's awareness of story structure. As indicated in Table 6.4, I found that in primary children's oral retellings following independent reading of texts, 59% to 88% of beginnings were recalled and following teachers' reading of texts 50% to

68% of beginnings were recalled. Like the teachers, I also found that when giving written recalls, Grade 2 (term 2) and 3 children gave more information from beginnings than other locations. However, teachers' commented least of all on locations about Grade 1 children's written recall of beginnings of texts whereas my analysis indicated that Grade 1 children recalled beginnings second most frequently. Golden (1984) also reported that Grade 2 children's beginnings were more elaborated than Grade 1 children. However, Golden (1984) found that beginnings in Grade 3 children's retellings were not elaborated.

Teachers described similar aspects of beginnings as well as middles and endings at each primary grade. Recall of setting, characters and descriptions of characters and their actions as well as the presence of problems were observed in beginnings across primary grades with more in Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings.

In other research, setting or statements regarding time or place of story have been recognized as a frequent component of retellings (Anderson, 1993; Goodman et al., 1987; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Anthony et al., 1991; Valencia, et al., 1990; Smith & Keister, 1996). Pronger, Johnson and Yore (1985), Varnhagen (1989) and Stein and Glenn (1979) found that Kindergarten and Grade 1 children frequently recalled setting information while Golden (1984) noted that setting was not included in Grade 1 to 3 children's retellings. Kindergarten children have been found to rarely recall characters' intentions or problems and to recall fewer goal statements than Grade 1 children (Stewart & Dunning as cited by Hall, 1987; Varnhagen, 1989). Golden (1984) reported that Grade 1 to 3 children identified characters as well as initial actions of main characters, their attributes and motivations. Stein and Glenn (1979) also noted that Grade 1 children best remembered initiating events (causes) in stories.

Except for Grade 3, teachers gave no or few comments regarding primary children's oral recall of the middle of texts following independent reading. However, in written retellings, middles of texts were frequently noted. Teachers described text middles as comprised of details, problems and events. In my analysis, I found that in oral retellings following independent reading of texts, 34% to 67% of middles were recalled, with a lower percentage of middles recalled than beginnings. Written recall of information from the middles of texts was second most frequent of the three text locations for primary children. However, there were also some differences between teachers' observations and my analysis of the middles of texts. For example, only 3% of teachers' comments referred to Grade 1 children's written recall of middles of texts whereas in my analysis, Grade 1 children recalled 74% of middles of stories. In addition, only 6% of teachers' comments described Grade 3 children's written recall of middles of stories but my analysis indicated that Grade 3 children recalled information from middles second most frequently.

Teachers infrequently described primary children's recall of endings especially for Grade 1 and 3 children's written retellings. Of all locations, teachers expressed most concerns regarding difficulty with or the absence of endings in Grade 2 and 3 children's written retellings and Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 3 children's oral retellings. Although not as low as teachers' percentages of comments, results of my analysis also indicated primary children's limited recall of endings.

Anderson (1985) and Morrow (1988) noted the importance of ending information in oral retellings including whether the problem is resolved, goal attained or story effectively concluded. Like the findings of this study, Mandler and Johnson (1977) reported that endings were least often recalled for all age groups. Golden (1984) found that while Grade 3 children focused on endings, they were not evident in Grade 1 and 2 children's retellings.

Although teachers commented less frequently regarding sequence than location of information, sequence was the second most frequent of all sub-categories for Grade 2 children's written retellings and a frequent sub-category of concerns and comments regarding written retellings of Grade 1 children and oral retellings of Kindergarten and Grade 3 children. The importance of recalling or organizing events in a correct, coherent or reasonably logical structural order resulting in a well formed narrative or expository structure has been recognized by other researchers as well (Morrow, 1989b; Y. Goodman et al., 1987; Smith & Keister, 1996; Clark, 1982; Anthony, Johnson, Mickelson & Preece, 1991; Farr & Lowe, 1994; Brown & Cambourne, 1987).

Teachers in this study described Kindergarten and Grade 1 children as experiencing more difficulty than older children with sequencing oral and written retellings. Piaget (1960) explained that six to eight year olds lack cognitive structures to encode temporal relationships resulting in retellings of texts that are poorly organized. Pelligrini and Galda (1982) also concluded that sequencing is difficult before the age of seven years. However, Brown (1975) and Stein and Glenn (1975/1979) described Kindergarten children as aware of basic story organization and as capable of recalling the correct sequence of story events in simply constructed or logically ordered narratives. Differences in sequence across grades have been reported. Applebee (1978) noted that children's stories gradually become more complex, beginning with a string of unrelated events to highly structured explications. Kindergarten children's story structure has been described as partial, some Kindergarten children recalling incidents as unrelated events (Morrow, 1989a). Stewart and Dunning (as cited by Hall, 1987) and Taylor (1980) reported that older children recalled information in better sequence. Salgo (1988) found differences in connectivity in stories between preschoolers and Grade 2 children.

Text Focus

Teachers frequently described primary children as relying on text information. More comments were expressed regarding facility with written recall of text information and difficulty with oral recall of text information. Teachers expressed many concerns regarding difficulty or the absence of utilization of text information (especially details) in Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings.

There was some similarity between the teachers and researcher regarding the extent to which primary children relied on texts in their oral and written retellings. Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 children's recalls appeared to be highly constrained by texts as most information recalled was word-for-word from texts. In my analysis of clausal units in oral retellings, I found that 45% to 83% of clausal units involved verbatim recall with some substituting of text language and a small amount of embedding across sentences. Similar to teachers' comments, I found less reliance on texts by Grade 2 and 3 children as they used more of their background knowledge.

Tierney, Bridge, and Cera (1979) also reported more explicit than inferred information in free recalls. Brake (1981) found that both low and high achieving Grade 2 readers recalled more verbatim or text specific information on oral reading passages and were bound by text information rather than using inferential information to synthesize text information. However, Golden (1984) reported that Grade 1 and 2 children focused on generalized events rather than specific story details.

Beyond Text Focus

The extent to which children went beyond text information and relied on their own information, language and gave personal reactions was very limited in both oral and written retellings. More comments regarding Grade 3 children going beyond text in retellings were given than for other grade levels, and concerns were more frequently expressed regarding Grade 2 and 3 than about younger children's difficulty in relying on their own information. Teachers at all grade levels made direct statements regarding children using their own language and giving personal reactions through relating text information to their own experiences, expressing general feelings towards texts and recalling or inferring feelings and responses of characters, their problems and situations.

The teachers and I frequently agreed regarding the extent to which children went beyond texts in their retellings. I also found that primary children made less utilization of background experiences and knowledge than text information in oral and written retellings. Teachers' descriptions and my analysis indicated slightly more Grade 2 (term 1) children's retellings as going beyond the text information. We also found that Grade 1 and 2 (term 2) children gave fewer written recalls that indicated use of reader information through summarizing, inferring and creating their own texts. However, again there were some differences between teachers' comments and my analysis. For example, in describing Grade 3 children's written retellings, teachers gave slightly more beyond text than text focus comments while my analysis of clausal units indicated more units of a text focus nature.

Sutherland (1991), Morrow (1988), Brown and Cambourne (1987), Rhodes and Shanklin (1993), Smith and Keister (1996), Goodman et al. (1987), Tierney, Bridge and Cera (1979) and Stiggins (1991) recognized the importance of noting in recalls how readers construct their own meaning or personal text and connect texts to their personal background knowledge and experiences and to other texts. Mandler and Johnson (1977) concluded that reaction was least often recalled for all ages. Other researchers described internal responses and reactions as related to age. Stein and Glenn (1979) found that while Grade 1 children were capable of adding new information, fifth graders included more inferences and internal responses in their responses than did first graders. Pronger, Johnson, and Yore (1985) also noted that the reaction category was rarely found in Grade 1 children's recalls. Overall, results of the present research support findings in the literature regarding limited presence of beyond-text information in retellings.

Comprehension

Teachers commented on similar aspects of comprehension across the primary grades including general understanding, recall of main ideas, summarizing and accuracy. Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings were frequently described as including summaries and main ideas as well as the problems and resolution of problems especially in written retellings. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding children's lack of general understanding and absence of main ideas regarding characters, their actions and relationships between events.

Although few comments were given regarding accuracy in retellings, teachers noted inaccuracies in primary children's retellings especially about recall of text information, e.g., confusion of characters, their characteristics and actions. In my analysis, the smallest percentage of erroneous clauses was included by Grade 3 children in their retellings. Like the teachers, I found that inaccuracies consisted more of errors of text information than inappropriate generalizing, inferring or use of experiences. These findings are consistent with those in previous research. Stein and Glen (1975) concluded from their research that there were significant differences in total accurate recall due to age. They reported that Grade 1 children confused actions of main characters. Brake (1981) found a high amount of text erroneous information in retellings following silent reading by both low and high achieving Grade 2 readers.

Summarizing was one of the most frequently mentioned aspects of comprehension, particularly in retellings for Grade 2 and 3 children. In my analysis of recall clauses, I found that 5% to 14% of primary children's retellings indicated summarizing and generalizing of texts and like the teachers, I noted most summarizing in Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings. Farr et al. (1990) recognized the importance of indicating how children summarize and paraphrase what they read. Korman (as cited by Stein & Glen, 1975) noted that five year olds are capable of recalling the gist or theme of story. Golden

(1984) and Farr et al. (1990) found that third graders can summarize events and give main ideas and topic focus.

Teachers commented infrequently regarding instances of inferring in primary children's retellings but expressed more concerns regarding lack of inferencing in Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings. They described Grade 2 children's retellings as not getting beyond the literal level and as containing no inferences. A small percentage of teachers' comments were focused on Grade 3 children's understanding as being on a literal as well as an inferential level. In my analysis, I also found that instances of inferring ranged from only 4% to 19% of clausal units and that while limited, most inferring occurred in retellings of Grade 2 and 3 children.

McConaughy (1985) also noted lack of inferences in younger children's retellings and concluded that younger and less able readers have more limiting causal inference story schema. Stein and Glenn (1979) concluded that primary children tend to not make inferences regarding characters' internal states and six year old children were described by Flapan (1968) as having more difficulty than 12 year-olds in inferring the thoughts and feelings of film characters. They reported that children below 6 to 7 years have difficulty generating the cause of a behavior. Golden (1984) found that while younger children emphasize the outcomes of specific events, older children are capable of predicting the causes of events. Grade 3 children were also described by Tierney, Bridge and Cera (1978/1979) as capable of recalling textually inferred information. Wallace (as cited by Dunning, 1992) observed that while Grade 2 and 3 children were capable of inferring physical causality, inferences about characters' motives were more difficult.

Overall, the finding of previous research that ability to make inferences increases with grade level were supported in this study.

Other Factors

Throughout the primary grades teachers identified other factors affecting retellings including the nature of the retelling task, texts used and within-child factors. Teachers described factors within the child as including the nature of the primary child's oral and written language, memory, reading ability, personality, interest in the task and text, listening skills and use of personal experiences.

At all grade levels, teachers frequently talked about primary children's language, including lack of fluency and maturity. They noted that if children do not write fluently, written retellings may not reflect what they could have retold orally. Smith and Keister (1996) also described the quality and complexity of children's language as affecting their retellings. Language factors including vocabulary diversity, word choice and use of fluent, connected sentences have been described by other researchers as affecting retellings (Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Bintz & Harste, 1990a; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Bartelo, 1984).

Other within-child factors identified by teachers in this study have been described in the literature as affecting retellings and comprehension. Age and development of the reader have been described by other researchers as affecting retellings (Irwin & Mitchell, 1983). Piaget and Inhelder (1969) concluded that cognitive level influenced ability to recall logical sequences in stories. Rhodes (1979) also noted that memory ability accounted for individual differences in reading comprehension. Y. Goodman et al.

(1987) indicated how quality of retellings may be influenced by children's interest in the subject matter or a particular text. Rhodes (1979) also described children's familiarity with a story and their prior knowledge as affecting retellings. Rhodes and Shanklin (1993), Dixon-Krauss (1996), Galda (1980), Bunbury (1985) and Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson (1985) described individual reader's experiences or knowledge schemata regarding the context, how texts are constructed, story sequences, type of text, topic and concepts as affecting retellings.

Like teachers in the study, researchers have described reading ability as affecting retellings. Rhodes (1979) found that recall strategies were influenced by coding skills and Anderson (1985) noted that Grade 3 children's retellings were of lower quality as more miscues and less semantically and grammatically acceptable miscues were made. Brake (1981) reported greater retelling differences for high than low Grade 2 reading achievers following silent reading.

Concerns within the Other Factors category also involved the nature of the texts used in retellings. Teachers described difficult texts used for oral retellings as long, lacking plot and containing short sentences, unnatural language, and uninteresting and unfamiliar content. They also commented on the extent to which the structure of texts, story line, amount of episodes and nature of illustrations were appropriate for written retellings. Text structure or organization has been described as affecting retellings in other research as well (Irwin & Mitchell, 1983). Well structured texts are believed to contribute to story lines that are easy to follow resulting in well-structured retellings (Bower, 1976; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein & Nezworski, 1978; and Y. Goodman, 1992c). Stein and Glenn (1979) explained how texts with a regular sequence of setting, initiating event, external response, consequence, attempt and reaction facilitated children's comprehension of stories. Rhodes (1979) and Stein and Glenn (1979) reported higher levels of comprehension for more predictable texts consisting of repetitive and cumulative syntactic and semantic sequences and increased match of text events to the order of events in children's internal schema. Story complexity or the difficulty level of texts was also described as affecting sequencing abilities (Stein & Glenn, 1979). In addition, the authors noted that when texts contained causal relations, younger children could recall sequence. Feathers and White (1987) reported differences in comprehension and in how readers construct meaning depending on type of story used. Grade 2 children, for example, were noted to recall narrative text more easily than expository text (Dixon, 1978). The quality of text language has also been described as affecting retellings (Y. Goodman, 1992c). Children's familiarity with text language, e.g., whether they can identify the language patterns used in texts, was noted to facilitate comprehension (Anthony et al., 1991; Teale, Hiebert & Chittenden, 1987). Researchers described complete and partial pictures as enhancing Kindergarten, Grade 2 and 3 children's listening comprehension and assisting readers to make abstractions and inferences based on text (Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993). Peng and Levin (1978) also reported positive short and long term advantages of pictures on Grade 2 children's story recall.

Rhodes and Shanklin (1993) concluded that, "Retellings can be considerably different, even for the same reader and text, depending on the situation in which the retelling is done" (p. 232). One aspect of the situation involves teachers' approaches which teachers in this study identified as affecting retellings. Teaching approaches including prior reading, allowing access to texts during retellings and amount of time given to complete the written retelling were noted to affect the quality of primary children's retellings. Pronger, Johnson and Yore (1985) found that Grade 1 children recalled significantly more context words, episodes and categories when they heard the story more than twice. Brake (1981) reported that both low and high Grade 2 reading achievers were able to comprehend more difficult material at higher instructional levels when reading silently than orally. Group interactive reading rather than whole class organization has been found more effective in facilitating Grade 1 children's recall of story (Bottone, 1995). In addition, Gambrell and Jawitz (1993) indicated that comprehension of retellings was enhanced when children were instructed to attend to the illustrations and form mental images for the stories.

Teachers in this study expressed concerns regarding the nature of the retelling task including lack of familiarity with the task of retelling. Lack of understanding or misunderstanding of the retelling task was believed to affect children's retellings. Grade 2 and 3 children, for example, were observed to not always consider the reader and did not always clarify their written language for the reader. Villaume (1994) also linked Grade 1 and 2 children's success with character introductions to their interpretation of the task, e.g., whether they interpreted retelling as a memory check.

General Evaluative

Teachers used comments of an evaluative nature to describe retellings at all Grade levels. Adjectives such as "good" and "fine" described primary children's retellings as well as reference to the amount recalled and reading ability.

Summary

Overall, there were many more similarities between teachers' descriptions of children's oral and written retellings across Grade levels than there were differences as noted in the frequency and nature of teachers' comments and descriptions regarding primary children's recall of text beginnings, details and language. Teachers also noted children's infrequent oral and written inclusion of endings, responses and feelings towards texts as well as use of their own language. In addition, similar factors affecting oral and written retellings were described including the nature of the retelling task and texts used as well as within-child factors.

Teachers also recognized differences between children's oral and written retellings. They observed that sometimes Grade 2 children provided better oral than written retellings. Teachers also more frequently noted text middles in written retellings and expressed more concerns regarding the text focus nature of children's written than oral retellings.

Few developmental trends were evident in teachers' descriptions as the nature of teachers' comments was similar across the grades. Other researchers have also concluded that story recall in general was unrelated to age. Stein and Glenn (1975), for example, found that the types and frequency of text recalled were similar across Grades 1 and 5.

CHAPTER 7

Results and Discussion of Written Literature Responses

This chapter is organized similarly to Chapters 5 and 6. In the first section, teachers' descriptions and my analyses of children's responses to literature are presented for each grade from Kindergarten to Grade 3. In the last section, similarities and differences in teachers' descriptions across the primary grades as well as similarities and differences between teachers' and my analyses are discussed and related to the literature. The literature used in this study consisted primarily of narrative text.

Literature Responses for Kindergarten Children

Teachers evaluated literature responses for kindergarten children following teacher reading of texts in both terms. Results and analysis of teachers comments and my analysis of children's literature responses are presented in Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4.

Type/Kind of Responses

As indicated in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, 42% of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 10% of their positive comments in term 2 described Kindergarten children as responding to texts through illustrating, labeling and making observations. Fifteen percent of teachers' concerns in term 2 referred to difficulties with these kinds of responses.

In term 1, teachers most frequently described Kindergarten children's responses as involving an illustration usually with an accompanying label but by term 2 children were doing this much less frequently and with lower quality of pictures. It was noted, for

Table 7.1

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 1

Grade	K		1		2		3	
	P=19	N=12	P=75	N=41	P=183	N=112	P=27	N=4
Category								
Kind/Type								
Pictures & Labels								
Writes with Pictures					+1%			
Labels with Pictures	+26%		+4%		+1%			
Labels without Pictures	+16%		+1%					
Nature of Drawings			+4%		+1%			
Total: Pictures & Labels	+42%		+9%		+3%			
Observation &/or Comment								
Narrative								
Retelling					+1%		+7%	
Objective/Literary							+4%	
Total: Kind/Type	+42%		+9%		+3%		+11%	
Content								
Main Idea/Gist			+4%				+4%	
Summarizes/Generalizes	+5%		+4%		+4%	-1%	+7%	
Main Part & Events	+5%		+27%	-7%	+6%	-3%	+4%	
Problem-Solution				-2%				
Details	+5%	-17%	+12%	-5%	+13%	-12%	+7%	
Problem-Solution					+3%			
Responded to Pictures					+1%			
Comprehension					+1%			
Total: Content	+16%	-17%	+47%	-15%	+28%	-15%	+22%	

Personal								
Expressive v. Text Language		-58%	+13%	-15%	+14%	-5%	+15%	-25%
Reasons		-17%	+3%	-15%	+13%	-11%		
Favorite Parts			+7%		+15%	-13%		
Personal Experiences	+11%		+1%	-2%	+2%	-1%		
Total: Personal	+11%	-75%	+24%	-32%	+44%	-29%	+15%	-25%
Appearance								
Sentence Structure								
Sequence								
Complete & Complex Sentences	+5%				+1%	-11%	+4%	
Capitalization & Punctuation					+1%		+4%	-25%
Spacing						-2%		
Quality					+1%			
Making Sense/Meaning					+1%	-2%		
Structure/Clarity							+4%	
Total: Sentence Structure	+5%				+2%	-14%	+11%	-25%
Story Structure								
General: Presence & Examples							+2%	
Length/Amount	+5%		+4%		+1%	-1%		
Sequence/Sense of Story	+5%	-8%	+4%	-10%	+3%	-3%	+4%	
Location					+6%	-7%	+19%	
Quality								
Understanding of							+4%	
Total: Story Structure	+11%	-8%	+8%	-10%	+10%	-11%	+26%	
Word Structure								
Spelling			+3%	-12%	+2%	-4%		-25%
Phonetical/Sounding								
Chart				-2%				
Sight Vocab			+1%					
Writing					+1%			
Total: Word Structure			+4%	-15%	+2%	-4%		-25%
Total: Appearance	+16%	-8%	+16%	-34%	+14%	-29%	+37%	-50%

Other								
Relation Between Reading & Writing	+5%							
Nature of Task			+4%		+1%	-9%	+4%	
Nature of Text					+1%			
Skills & Personality				-15%		-2%	+4%	
Total: Other	+5%		+4%	-15%	+2%	-11%	+7%	
General: Evaluative	+11%		+4%	-15%	+9%	-15%	+7%	-25%

Table 7.2

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 2

Grade	K		1		2		3	
	P=142	N=27	P=56	N=13	P=271	N=60	P=54	N=14
Category								
Kind/Type								
Pictures & Labels	+3%	-15%						
Writes with Pictures								
Labels with Pictures			+4%					
Labels without Pictures	+1%				+1%			
Nature of Drawings			+2%	-8%				
Total: Pictures & Labels	+4%	-15%	+6%	-8%	+1%			
Observation &/or Comment	+5%							
Narrative	+1%		+2%					
Retelling					+7%	-5%	+13%	
Objective/Literary							+13%	
Total: Kind/Type	+10%	-15%	+7%	-8%	+8%	-5%	+26%	
Content								
Main Idea/Gist	+5%		+16%	-8%			+2%	-7%
Summarizes/Generalizes	+4%				+4%		+7%	
Main Part & Events	+4%	-7%	+16%		+2%	-5%	+9%	-7%
Problem-Solution	+2%	-4%						
Details	+8%	-19%	+11%	-31%	+8%	-8%	+17%	-7%
Problem-Solution					+1%			
Responded to Pictures								
Comprehension							+2%	-7%
Total: Content	+23%	-30%	+46%	-38%	+15%	-13%	+37%	-29%

Personal								
Expressive v. Text Language	+5%				+13%	-7%	+6%	-7%
Reasons	+1%	-4%	+7%	-15%	+12%	-13%		
Favorite Parts			+14%		+23%	-23%	+2%	
Personal Experiences			+7%			-2%	+4%	-7%
Total: Personal	+6%	-4%	+29%	-15%	+48%	-43%	+11%	-14%
Appearance								
Sentence Structure								
Absence				-8%				
Sequence	+3%		+2%					
Complete & Complex	+3%				+1%	-3%		
Capitalization & Punctuation	+4%				+1%			-14%
Spacing	+6%	-19%						
Quality	+2%	-7%						
Making Sense/Meaning			+1%					
Structure/Clarity								-29%
Total: Sentence Structure	+18%	-26%	+2%	-8%	+3%	-3%		-43%
Story Structure								
General: Presence & Examples							+7%	
Length/Amount	+7%				+2%			
Sequence/Sense of Story	+1%	-7%	+7%	-8%	+5%		+13%	-14%
Location	+4%				+4%	-5%	+4%	
Quality	+1%							
Understanding of								
Total: Story Structure	+13%	-7%	+7%	-8%	+11%	-5%	+24%	-14%
Word Structure								
Spelling	+14%	-7%	+2%	-8%	+1%			
Phonetical/Sounding	+8%	-4%						
Chart								
Sight Vocab							+2%	
Writing								
Total: Word Structure	+23%	-11%	+2%	-8%	+1%		+2%	
Total: Appearance	+54%	-44%	+11%	-23%	+16%	-8%	+26%	-57%

Other								
Relation Between Reading &	+2%	-4%						
Writing							+1%	-13%
Nature of Task								
Skills								-2%
Nature of Text							+1%	-2%
Skills & Personality								-2%
Amount	+2%	-4%					+2%	-18%
Total: Other								
General: Evaluative	+6%	-4%	+7%	-15%			+10%	-10%

Table 7.3

Researcher's Analysis of Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 1

Grade	K (n=15)	1 (n=41)	2 (n=74)	3 (n=48)
Category				
Descriptive Statements				
Labelling	27%			
Retelling			1%	
Characters			6%	4%
Description/Appearance	13%	22%	3%	27%
What they say	27%	10%	7%	
Actions (1) & (2)	33%	32%	19%	56%
Total: Descriptive Statements	100%	63%	35%	87%
Engagement/Involvement				
Feelings re Text		5%	20%	10%
Favorite Character		2%	3%	
Favorite Part/Actions		15%	27%	
Favorite Description/Appearance			3%	
Character Assessment				
Character Introspection				
Relates to Own Experience			1%	
Questioning/Predicting			3%	
Total: Engagement/Involvement		22%	57%	10%

Explanations				
Descriptive Statements				
Characters: General		7%		
Characters: Actions				
Literary Evaluation				
Engagement/Involvement				
General		5%		2%
Character Introspection			1%	
Favorite Part				
Total: Explanations		12%	1%	2%
Literary Evaluation				
Illustrations				
Language; Form				
Rhyme		2%		
Literary Comments: re Author			3%	
Literary Comments: re Illustrator				
Extending & Hypothesizing			3%	
Total: Literary Evaluation		2%	5%	
Digressions	21%		1%	

Table 7.4

Researcher's Analysis of Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read by Teachers in Term 2

Grade	K (n=56)	1 (n=46)	2 (n=112)	3 (n=38)
Category				
Descriptive Statements				
Labelling	2%	2%		
Retelling		2%		
Characters			15%	8%
Description/Appearance	9%	9%	8%	16%
What they say		4%	1%	3%
Actions (1) & (2)	43%	7%	21%	66%
Resolution	2%			
Drawing	4%			
Total: Descriptive Statements	59%	24%	44%	92%
Engagement/Involvement				
Feelings re Text		11%	13%	5%
Favorite Character	2%	9%	6%	
Favorite Part/Actions		13%	4%	
Favorite Description/Appearance			4%	
Character Assessment	5%		1%	
Character Introspection	7%	2%	1%	
Relates to Own Experience	4%	15%	3%	3%
Questioning/Predicting				
Total: Engagement/Involvement	18%	50%	32%	8%

Explanations			
Descriptive Statements			
Characters: General	4%	2%	
Characters: Actions	4%	7%	
Literary Evaluation			
Engagement/Involvement			
General		4%	
Character Introspection		2%	
Favorite Part			6%
Total: Explanations	7%	15%	6%
Literary Evaluation			
Illustrations	2%	9%	2%
Language; Form			
Rhyme			6%
Literary Comments: re Author			6%
Literary Comments: re Illustrator			2%
Extending & Hypothesizing	14%		
Total: Literary Evaluation	16%	9%	16%
Digressions		2%	1%

example, that detail and organization might be missing in illustrations. Labeling generally involved providing the title and naming the character.

In my analysis, I found that 27% of Kindergarten children's literature response statements in term 1 involved labeling pictures by providing characters and titles. Kindergarten children differed in their progression across terms as all children did not progress from responding by illustrating to labeling with and without illustrations.

A few teachers in term 2 reported that Kindergarten children expressed observations and described characters' actions by making comments on what the characters were doing. Initially, illustrations sometimes accompanied these observations.

Content/Text Focus

Teachers focused on summaries, critical or main parts and events, main ideas, problems and solutions and details in Kindergarten children's responses. Sixteen percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 23% of their positive comments in term 2 focused on text content. Seventeen percent and 30% of teachers' concerns in terms l and 2 respectively described difficulty with main ideas and details about events, problems and solutions.

In both terms teachers referred to instances of summarizing and generalizing in Kindergarten children's responses. For example, a child might summarize the book The Little Old Lady by referring to it as *"the little old lady who was not afraid of nothing"* or generalize about the tractor in the book Katy and the Big Snow as *"a hard working tractor."*

Teachers observed that Kindergarten children often chose to write about main events or parts and also noted that children sometimes omitted the critical part or important point. Teachers also described through general statements Kindergarten children's responses in term 2 as having the gist and main idea of the story thereby capturing what the whole story was about. Kindergarten children sometimes included the problem and/or solution in their responses. For example, Sarah was noted to identify the problem and solution in The Mystery of the Missing Red Mitten by explaining that *"Anne lost her mitten and the snowman had it. Anne found it."*

Teachers most frequent comments and concerns in the Content category were focused on the extent to which details were included in Kindergarten children's responses. Responses were described as ranging from including "no details" to "lots of details." The details which children responded to were often the "... popular parts of the story."

In my analysis, I found that all Kindergarten children's responses in term l as well as the majority of responses in term 2 were descriptive. In both terms, children most frequently described characters' actions, their appearance and what they said.

Personal

Teachers noted that Kindergarten children were beginning to respond personally to literature although this did not occur frequently. Only 11% (term l) and 6% (term 2) of teachers' comments described responses of a personal nature. Seventy-five percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 referred to the absence of this type of response. Personal responses were described as emotional, expressive and showing strong feeling.

In my analysis, I found that while all personal sub-categories were low, Kindergarten children began giving descriptive-engagement type responses in term 2. As Table 7.4 illustrates, 18% of children's responses in term 2 were of an engagement nature which usually involved assessment or introspection of their favorite characters. In addition, 14% of their response statements in term 2 were extensions of texts as evident in one child's hypothesis in A Pocket for Corduroy that Corduroy's button could be on the bed, the floor or in a tree.

Sometimes teachers referred to Kindergarten children's responses in term 2 as expressing emotional feelings. A child's response that a character *"was beautiful"* was described as an emotional response or emotional statement. Two positive comments in term 1 referred to Kindergarten children's utilization of their personal experiences. However, teachers' concerns in term 1 also noted and cited examples of Kindergarten children's reliance on book talk and text vocabulary. I also found that only 4% of Kindergarten children's responses indicated that they related texts to their experiences. Teachers infrequently described Kindergarten children as giving or not giving reasons for characters' actions in their responses. While I noted that kindergarten children were beginning to give explanations of characters and their actions, only 7% of their responses in term 2 were placed in this category.

Appearance

Teachers frequently (16% and 54% of their positive comments in terms 1 and 2 respectively) described the appearance of Kindergarten children's responses with most comments related to sentence, story and word structure. The number of positive comments describing story structure and word structure increased from term 1 to 2. Teachers also frequently expressed concerns regarding the absence of story, sentence and word structure in term 2. Eight percent (term 1) and 44% (term 2) of their comments referred to difficulties with the appearance of responses.

By term 2, teachers noted that Kindergarten children were writing in sentences and were emerging in their ability to space words. They described the quality of children's sentences as ranging from simple to complex. They also noted that children showed varying degrees of awareness of punctuation, sequence and word spacing. Most comments regarding story structure described the accuracy of sequence and the range or number of sentences, although by term 2, teachers also described the extent to which Kindergarten children recalled components of story structure including beginnings, middles and endings of texts. Most positive comments about word structure referred to the extent to which Kindergarten children were able to include correct spelling in their responses. Teachers commented on the locations of letters and sounds correctly represented particularly in beginning and ending locations. They also observed some evidence of syllabication in responses. In term 2, concern was expressed about inclusion of random and extra letters in responses, e.g., Sarah "... knows that the words are longer and therefore she's adding more letters [for] sounds she doesn't hear."

Other Skills

Five percent and 2% of teachers' positive comments in terms 1 and 2 respectively focused on the quality of written expression and the relationship between reading ability and the quality of responses. For example, with respect to Randy's response to Franklin in the Dark, it was observed that "other children who can't read as well make up better stories."

General Evaluative

Eleven percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 6% of their positive comments in term 2 described Kindergarten children's responses through general evaluative comments such as "good attempt," "excellent," and "great." Teachers also used similar comments to describe Kindergarten children's illustrations.

Literature Responses for Grade 1 Children

Teachers evaluated Grade 1 children's literature responses following teacher reading of texts in both terms. Results of analysis of teachers' comments and children's responses to literature are presented in Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 near the beginning of this chapter.

Type/Kind of Responses

Nine percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 7% of their positive comments in term 2 focused on pictures, labels or narratives in responses. Only one concern was expressed in term 2 regarding the nature of children's drawings. In my analysis of Grade 1 children's response statements, 2% of their responses involved labeling characters and recalling titles.

Teachers described some Grade 1 children's responses as recalling and inferring from illustrations. They also described the nature of detail in Grade 1 children's illustrations. Leslie's illustration of Rosie's Walk, for example, was noted to "distinguish clearly that it's a fox." Sometimes teachers focused on development in children's illustrations and described some illustrations as indicating "good visual development" and other illustrations as "immature." At other times Grade 1 children were observed to label with no accompanying illustrations.

Content/Text Focus

As the data in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 indicate, teachers frequently noted the content of Grade 1 children's responses in both terms; 47% and 46% of teachers' positive comments in terms l and 2 respectively described the nature of text content in children's responses. Teachers also expressed frequent concerns regarding the absence of text content in responses; 15% and 38% of teachers' concerns referred to difficulties with text content. In my analysis I found that 63% of Grade 1 children's responses in term l and 24% of their responses in term 2 were of a descriptive or text focus nature.

Within the Content category, teachers most frequently described the presence and number of main parts and events and cited examples of each. It was noted, for example, that Charles' response to Jump Frog Jump included the "main thrust," and "important event" of the story, namely that *"frog got away."* Few concerns were expressed about difficulty with main parts and events. Teachers also noted the kinds of main parts and events included in responses. They observed that some Grade 1 children included the endings of texts, the active parts and parts that are illustrated or easily remembered in their responses.

Teachers referred to the presence of the main idea or "gist" in responses, more frequently noting this in term 2. In addition to general statements regarding the presence of main idea and gist in written responses and illustrations, teachers cited examples of main concepts and described main ideas as consisting of reasons.

Presence of details in responses was a focus of positive comments and concerns in both terms. While more comments were related to facility than difficulty with details in term l, teachers expressed more concerns with details in term 2. Teachers gave general statements regarding the presence of details in Grade 1 children's responses and referred to the number of details included as ranging from none to three details. They also noted that Grade 1 children sometimes "didn't elaborate" or include many details. The nature of details consisted primarily of main characters as teachers made general statements regarding inclusion of main characters and noted the number and descriptions of characters. Joe's response to The Three Billy Goats Gruff that "*The troll is ugly. He had a tail.*" was described as a description of the character. Details also included characters' conversation or dialogue. In my analysis, descriptive responses included descriptions of characters (22%; 9%), their conversations (10%; 4%) and actions (32%; 7%). Grade 1 children's descriptive responses decreased from term 1 to 2 as engagement responses increased.

Teachers gave general statements about Grade 1 children's summaries in their responses and cited examples of these summaries. Summaries were sometimes described in relation to main ideas, e.g., Leslie was "... summarizing the main ideas of the story Mushroom in the Rain."

Personal

Teachers frequently indicated that Grade 1 children's responses were of a personal nature. Twenty-four percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 29% of their positive comments in term 2 referred to Grade 1 children's responses as being personal in nature. However, 32% (term l) and 15% (term 2) of teachers' concerns referred to lack of a personal focus in responses. In my analysis, 22% and 50% of children's responses in terms l and 2 respectively were of a personal or engagement nature and consisted mostly of favourite parts or actions, feelings regarding texts and relating texts to personal experiences.

Beyond text responses to literature by Grade 1 children were described as extensions to texts read and as "imaginative" and "descriptive." Examples of imagination and creativity were often noted in children's use of their own words. In my analysis, 5% and 11% of children's responses referred to feelings regarding texts. Teachers also expressed concerns that Grade 1 children's responses were taken or quoted from the text. Responses with a text focus sometimes included a "recurring language pattern," or a "thread that went throughout the story."

Teachers infrequently described Grade 1 children as using or not using their personal experiences and "identify[ing] with the story." In my analysis, 15% of children's responses involved relating stories to their own experiences. When these comments were given, teachers sometimes cited specific examples of use of personal experiences as was observed when Helen responded to The Doorbell Rang by stating that cookies are something children like.

Relatively few positive comments referred to inclusion of reasons in responses but most concerns about personal responses involved reasons. In my analysis I found that during both terms, Grade 1 children were beginning to give explanations that were descriptive and of an engagement nature. I found that 7% of children's explanations in terms 1 and 2 respectively were of a descriptive nature and 5% and 6% of their explanations in terms 1 and 2 respectively were of an engagement nature. I also found that the content of explanations usually centered on the actions of characters and resolution of the problem. Teachers reported that Grade 1 children's responses ranged from often not "... get[ting] into reasons" for liking books or favourite parts to giving several reasons for liking texts. Enjoyment of and excitement about texts were cited as the most frequent reasons for Grade 1 children liking specific parts or entire texts. Reasons for liking texts were also sometimes related to personal experiences, e.g., unusual appearance of characters. Parts responded to were noted to be "funny," "unusual," "happy" and "scary" parts.

Seven percent and 14% of teachers' positive comments described Grade 1 children as responding to favourite parts of texts. As illustrated in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 in my analysis, 17% and 22% of Grade 1 children's engagement responses involved favourite characters and parts or actions. In addition to general observations regarding the presence of favourite parts in responses, teachers described Grade 1 children as responding to funny text illustrations, to happy parts or to scary and unusual parts that "made an impression." Teachers also commented that Grade 1 children's favourite parts were often the important parts of texts including text beginnings. In my analysis of response statements I found that Grade 1 children responded to the literary quality of texts including illustrations (9% of responses) and rhyme (2% of responses).

Appearance

Sixteen percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 11% in term 2 focused on the word, sentence and story structure of Grade 1 children's responses. Teachers also frequently expressed concerns (34% in term l and 23% in term 2) regarding the appearance of responses. More concerns than positive comments were expressed about the appearance of responses.

Teachers' most frequent positive comments about the appearance of Grade 1 children's responses referred to story structure particularly sense of story and sequence. Teachers also noted an increase in the length of Grade 1 children's responses. All teachers' concerns with story structure in both terms were focused on difficulties with sequence. Specific episodes or events were described as "not in right sequence" and sometimes Grade 1 children were described as giving "two separate thoughts" or details.

Teachers infrequently described the sentence structure of Grade 1 children's responses. Of all concerns regarding appearance, teachers expressed most concerns especially in term l regarding the word structure of responses. Some positive comments were also made about word structure. One of the main components of word structure noted was spelling. Some Grade 1 children were described as "... us[ing] some conventional spelling" but spelling difficulties particularly with endings or final sounds of words were also noted.

Other Factors

As Tables 7.1 and 7.2 indicate, teachers described other factors including the teacher's approach or directions, the amount of time given to complete responses and children's writing ability and attention span which they believed affected the quality of Grade 1 children's responses. Four percent of teachers' positive comments and 15% of their concerns in term 1 referred to these other factors. Children were described, for example, as having "... done what [they were] asked to do ... find a specific part..." and not get into the reason because of the amount of time given.

General Evaluative

Teachers used general evaluative comments such as "good," "very good," "not bad" and "immature" to describe Grade 1 children's responses. Four percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 7% their positive comments in term 2 were of a general evaluative nature. Fifteen percent of teachers' concerns in both terms were also of a general evaluative nature. Teachers sometimes included reasons for their evaluative comments about children's responses as when one teacher noted that Charles' response to Jump Frog Jump was "a good response [because it] told what happened in that part of the story."

Literature Responses for Grade 2 Children

Teachers evaluated Grade 2 children's literature responses following teacher reading of texts in both terms. Results of analysis of teachers' comments are presented in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 and of my analysis of children's literature responses in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 near the beginning of this chapter.

Type/Kind of Responses

Three percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 8% of their positive comments in term 2 referred to Grade 2 children's responses as including drawings and as being of a retelling-response nature. Five percent of teachers' concerns in term 2 noted difficulty with retellings.

Both the teachers and I found that Grade 2 children infrequently used pictures to accompany labels and written responses. The retelling component of Grade 2 children's responses was described as serving as an "interlude" to their responses or provided "... some background as an introduction." One teacher commented that "... it's almost like they [Grade 2 children] had a sense of the reader and therefore they summarized the book a little first (almost like an initiation and sensitivity to the reader) ..." However, teachers also observed that sometimes Grade 2 children responded first and then told some of the story. Teachers noted that retellings contained facts and incidents. In my analysis of Grade 2 children's responses, I noted that they recalled the characters. Teachers rarely noted the absence of retellings in responses.

Content/Text Focus

As described in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, teachers frequently described the nature of Grade 2 children's responses as focusing heavily on text content. Twenty-eight percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 15% in term 2 referred to the text content nature of responses. Fifteen percent and 13% of teachers' concerns in terms 1 and 2 respectively referred to difficulty with using text.

Teachers infrequently noted that Grade 2 children included the main and important parts and events in their responses. When they did, they sometimes described the main parts and events as consisting of facts and incidents, delete more cited examples of main parts and referred to the number of facts and incidents which Grade 2 children mentioned in their responses. However, it was also observed that sometimes Grade 2 children did not refer to the main parts in their responses and examples of missed main parts were cited. Only one concern was expressed regarding "miss[ing] the main ideas."

Both positive comments and concerns were expressed regarding instances of details in Grade 2 children's responses. Teachers described the amount of details mentioned as ranging from a "bare minimum" to "lots." They also described the kinds of details which Grade 2 children included in their responses as focusing largely on specific characters, their descriptions and actions. One child was noted, for example, to have "add[ed] what the old lady did with all the characters ..." in his response to The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid Of Anything. In my analysis, I found that 35% of Grade 2 children's responses in term l and 44% of their responses in term 2 consisted of recall of characters and descriptions of characters' actions, appearance and conversation, with the majority of responses about characters' actions.

A small percentage of teachers' positive comments in both terms referred to Grade 2 children's responses as giving summaries and synopses rather than details. One child's response, for example, was described as "... just to the point and no extension of the idea - doesn't tell much about the book." Teachers also cited examples of synopses, summaries and generalizations found in responses. Evaluative adjectives such as "nice," "good" and "brief" were used to describe Grade 2 children's summaries.

Teachers infrequently described the presence of problems and solutions in Grade 2 children's responses. When they did, they cited examples and gave general statements regarding problems and solutions which Grade 2 children mentioned in their responses. For example, a child was noted to "introduc[e] plausible under sea problems and adventures which the characters overcome" when responding to Brendan, Morgan and the Best Ever Cloud Machine.

Personal

While Grade 2 children were noted to "stick to the facts of the story," they were more frequently described as going beyond texts to give responses of a personal nature. Forty-four percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 48% of their positive comments in term 2 referred to Grade 2 children's responses as involving personal views and experiences, feelings, favourite parts and reasons. Twenty-nine percent of teachers' concerns in term l and 43% of their concerns in term 2 were focused on the absence of, or difficulties with, personal responses.

In my analysis, I found that 57% of Grade 2 children's responses in term l and 32% in term 2 were engagement or personal type responses. In addition, a small percentage of of Grade 2 children's explanations were of an engagement nature.

Teachers gave general comments regarding the presence and absence of personal responses. They referred to children writing personally, "show[ing] creativeness and imagination" and enjoying and liking the texts. They commented on and cited examples of references to the presence of feelings, opinions, views, wonderings and comments as in Michael's response that *"I loved that book Mascots of the Olympics. It is my favourite book out of all my favourite books. I especially liked it when Hakon saw the moose."* However, teachers also commented that Grade 2 children sometimes did not give reactions or comments in their responses. As indicated in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 in my analysis of Grade 2 children's responses, I found that one of their most common engagement responses in term 1 (20%) involved feelings regarding the texts. An additional 3% of Grade 2 children's responses showed involvement through questioning and predicting.

Teachers frequently noted the inclusion of reasons in Grade 2 children's responses with most reasons referring to favourite parts or reasons for liking texts. They expressed both positive comments and concerns regarding children's use of favourite parts as reasons. Teachers referred in a general or specific manner to the number of reasons for favourite parts or for liking texts as ranging from "... the beginning stage of responding - giv[ing] just one reason to two or more reasons." Teachers also described the quality of Grade 2 children's reasons as ranging from "good" or "better," when they compared stories, to "not good," when they did not support their reasons for liking texts or for favourite parts. In my analysis, only 1% (term 1) and 6% (term 2) of response statements included explanations for favourite parts.

Teachers noted that Grade 2 children more frequently described characters' actions as favourite parts. Sometimes Grade 2 children responded to or chose the "good over evil" parts of texts as their favourite parts. It was observed, for example, that one child responded to "... where the bad guy gets what's coming to him" in Jack and the Beanstalk. Teachers noted that Grade 2 children infrequently identified specific favourite characters in their responses. As noted in my analysis in Tables 7.3 and 7.4, Grade 2 children's engagement responses focused mostly on their favourite parts and actions (27% of responses in term 1 and 4% in term 2) as well as identification and description of their favourite characters (6% in term 1 and 10% in term 2) with few responses regarding character assessment and introspection.

Teachers also noted that Grade 2 children referred to literary features of texts as favorite parts, e.g., text language, illustrations, text endings and author. They described Grade 2 children as responding to the structure of texts or to the way texts were written including language patterns, rhyme and quotations. Specific examples of rhyme and illustrations mentioned by children in their responses were cited including their recall of the chant in Wombat Stew, *e.g., "Wombat stew, wombat stew. Crunchy, munchy for my lunchy wombat stew"* and their reliance on the illustration of Hush in order to conclude, *"I like Hush because he is cute."* In my analysis, 5% and 16% of Grade 2 children's responses in terms 1 and 2 respectively referred to literary aspects of the text including language, author, illustrator and illustrations.

Teachers infrequently described Grade 2 children as relating texts to their own experiences as well as to their experiences with literature. In my analysis, only 1% and 3% of Grade 2 children's responses indicated relating texts to their own experiences and their world. Typical of the small number of comments in this category was children's interest or engagement in texts because they could relate their interests in sports and animals to texts. Sometimes Grade 2 children were described as relating texts to their previous experiences with literature through combining stories. It was noted, for example, that Samuel's responses to Hansel and Gretel (video) and Possum Magic were "like he mixes the two books together and his ideas ..." Teachers also expressed some concern about Grade 2 children's lack of utilization of personal experiences in their responses.

Appearance

As indicated in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, 14% of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 16% of their positive comments in term 2 referred to the story, sentence and word structure of Grade 2 children's responses. In addition, the most frequent category of teachers' concerns in term 1 involved difficulties in appearance of responses. Twenty-nine percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 8% of their concerns in term 2 noted difficulties with story, sentence and word structure.

Teachers more frequently described Grade 2 children's facility with story structure than with word or sentence structure. They described responses as showing a sense of story structure and concept of story. Cohesiveness and sequence were considered by teachers to provide an indication of knowledge of story structure. Children's responses were sometimes described as "connected," "related" and "tied together" or conversely, as "not related" and "not connected." In addition to general statements such as "mak[ing] use of sequence" or "in order," sequential responses were described as containing beginnings, middles and endings with more comments related to endings. For example, Samuel's response to The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid Of Anything was described as giving "... the closing or ending," and an example of his ending in his response to Little Witch was cited, e.g., *"they flew away to scare people."* Teachers used various descriptors including "typical" and "good" to describe the quality of endings. Length of response was also viewed as related to story structure but few teachers' positive comments were focused on this factor.

A small percentage of positive comments were related to Grade 2 children's use of sentence structure as making sense and indicating "growth in punctuation." Teachers' most frequent concerns regarding sentence structure involved Grade 2 children not always responding in complete sentences and providing an "isolated listing of things from the story." In addition, one child's sentence structure was described as further complicated by lack of proper spacing.

In relation to word structure, teachers placed some focus on Grade 2 children's spelling particularly their facility with beginning sounds and visual memory. In addition to noting progress, teachers also cited examples of misspellings.

Other Factors

Two percent of teachers' positive comments in both terms and 11% and 18% of their concerns in terms 1 and 2 respectively, referred to other factors affecting the quality and amount of Grade 2 children's responses to literature. As Tables 7.1 and 7.2 illustrate, the Other Factors category included the nature of the response task, teachers' instructions and expectations, texts used, and skills and personality. More negative than positive comments were expressed regarding these other factors.

The difficulty of the response task was stated as negatively affecting responses. It was observed, for example, that "this is a complex task to compare movies" or to understand "the profoundness of Wilfred" in Wilfred Gordon Mcdonald Partridge. Children's understanding of the response task was also noted as contributing to the quality of responses, e.g., "... sometimes children think they can only have one favorite part when they are asked for their favorite part."

Sometimes Grade 2 children were described as "led into the response" by teachers' instructions including "teacher emphasis" or "what the teacher talked about, e.g., taught features of books. It was also noted that teachers' directions and instructions as to how to structure the responses such as requiring that openings begin with *My favorite part is ...* "limits what you're going to say." Teachers' expectations were also believed to affect the amount written. As one teacher explained, "... I would have reminded them that I expected more than *I like the book ... the book was funny.*" Classroom experiences including the amount of reading to children were believed to contribute to responses by expanding children's understanding of literature. The amount of time given to complete responses was also noted to affect the quality of responses.

A small percentage of comments was focused on the nature of the texts used including the text language as well as children's interest in and familiarity with the story. Teachers commented that responses chosen often reflected the appealing non-sentence language and pictures of texts.

A few teachers referred to children's writing ability as affecting the amount of response given. One child was described as "... just beginning to feel comfortable writing. It is obvious that he will need reminders to extend his writing." Similarly, only a few comments were related to children's personalities as affecting their responses. Shy children, for example, were noted to rely on the book rather than within themselves when writing responses.

General Evaluative

Teachers used general evaluative comments to describe Grade 2 children's responses; 9% of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 10% of their positive comments in term 2 were of a general evaluative nature. Fifteen percent of teachers' concerns in term 1 and 10% of their concerns in term 2 consisted of evaluative statements.

In addition to using adjectives such as "good," "fair," "immature" and "basic" to describe responses, teachers also noted the inaccuracy of some responses. Teachers referred to grade and age expectations in their evaluation of Grade 2 children's responses, including whether children "... told enough for a Grade 2 early in the year" and moved beyond beginning stage level 1 responses or listings to include reasons. Teachers also evaluated Grade 2 children's responses through comparisons with other grades. One child's response to The Little Fir Tree, for example, was described as "a typical response for Grade 3 also."

Literature Responses for Grade 3 Children

Literature responses for Grade 3 children were available in both terms following independent and teacher reading of texts. Results of analysis of teachers' comments and children's responses to teacher read texts are presented in Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4. These tables are presented near the beginning of this chapter. Results of analysis of

Table 7.5

Summary of Teachers' Comments on Grade 3 Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read Independently in Terms 1 and 2

	Term 1		Term 2	
	P=17	N=5	P=46	N=11
Category				
Kind/Type				
Objective/Literary	+6%		+9%	
Retelling	+6%		+4%	
Total: Kind/Type	+12%		+13%	
Content				
Comprehension			+7%	-18%
Main Part/Event	+4%			
Main Idea				
Summary				
Presence/Amount	+6%		+9%	
Quality	+6%			
Total: Summary	+12%		+9%	
Details				
Presence/Amount	+29%		+4%	
Kind				
Characters	+4%			
Total: Details	+29%		+9%	
Total: Content	+41%		+28%	-18%
Personal				
Opinion/Feelings/Comments				
Presence & Nature of	+29%		+17%	
Personal Experiences			+4%	
Favorite Parts			+7%	
Total: Personal	+29%		+28%	
Appearance				
Sentence Structure				
Structure/Clarity			+9%	-36%
Punctuation/Conventions				-9%
Total: Sentence Structure	+11%		+9%	-45%
Story Structure				
General: Presence & Examples			+4%	
Sequence			+4%	
Location	+12%	-60%		-18%
Length	+6%	-20%		-9%
Total: Story Structure	+18%	-80%	+9%	-27%

Word Structure					
Spelling		-20%			
Vocab				+2%	
Penmanship/Writing					
Total: Word Structure		-20%		+2%	
Total: Appearance	+18%	-100%		+20%	-73%
Other					
Nature of Task				+2%	
Personality					
Total: Other				+2%	
General: Evaluative				+9%	-9%

Table 7.6

Researcher's Analysis of Grade 3 Children's Literature Responses to Texts Read Independently in Terms 1 and 2

	Independent Reading	
	Term 1 (n=70)	Term 2 (n=133)
Category		
Descriptive Statements		
Labelling		
Retelling		
Characters: Lists (names)	17%	20%
Description/Appearance	11%	15%
What they say	3%	4%
Actions (1) (2)	31%	37%
Total: Descriptive Statements	63%	75%
Engagement/Involvement		
General Statement		
Feelings re Book	7%	2%
Favorite Character		
Favorite Part/Actions		
Favorite Description/Appearance		
Character Assessment		
Character Introspection	9%	1%
Relates to Own Experience	1%	1%
Story Involvement		1%
Total: Engagement/Involvement	17%	5%
Explanations		
Descriptive Statements		
Characters: General		1%
Characters: Actions	1%	
Literary Evaluation		
Engagement/Involvement		
General		1%
Character Introspection		1%
Relates to Own Experience		2%
Total: Explanations	1%	4%
Literary Evaluation		
Illustrations: General Comments	3%	
Language; Form		
Rhyme		
Literary Comments: re Author	1%	6%
Literary Comments: re Illustrator		2%
Extending & Hypothesizing		2%
Total: Literary Evaluation	4%	10%
Digressions	14%	7%

teachers' comments and children's responses to responses to independently read texts are presented in Tables 7.5 and 7.6 on the following pages.

Type/Kind of Responses

Eleven percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 26% in term 2 regarding responses to teacher read texts referred to Grade 3 children's responses as being of an objective, retelling and retelling-response nature. In addition, 12% and 13% of teachers' positive comments in terms 1 and 2 respectively about responses to independently read texts referred to these types of responses.

Teachers used general statements to describe some responses as being "like a retelling," or recount of the story, as "more of a retelling than a response" or of combining retellings with responses. These responses were described as containing a "brief description ..., a lot of the book" and details. Both teachers and I noted that details mentioned in retelling responses often involved recall and description of characters.

Teachers commented that Grade 3 children mentioned text characteristics such as the author, the title, what the author wrote about, the publisher, number of chapters and illustrations. In my analysis, I found that 4% of children's responses in term l and 10% of their responses in term 2 to independently read texts involved literary evaluation. I also noted more literary evaluative responses when children read texts independently as compared with responses to teacher-read texts.

Content/Text Focus

Of all categories, teachers most frequent positive comments referred to the text content in Grade 3 children's responses. Twenty-two percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 37% in term 2 on responses to texts heard described Grade 3 children's responses as containing text content. In addition, 41% (term l) and 28% (term 2) of teachers' positive comments following independent reading of texts referred to text content in responses. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding Grade 3 children's difficulty with text content. In term 2, 29% of teachers' concerns about responses to texts heard and 18% of their concerns about responses to texts read independently referred to these difficulties. My analysis also indicates in Tables 7.3, 7.4 and 7.6 that during both terms, Grade 3 children most frequently gave descriptive or content responses; 87% and 92% of their responses to teacher read texts in terms l and 2 respectively were of a descriptive or content nature as well as 63% (term 1) and 75% (term 2) to independently read texts. In addition, I found that children gave fewer descriptive responses following independent reading of texts as compared with responses to texts read by teachers.

Teachers distinguished between responses containing summaries and those containing details. Through direct statements and examples, they described summarized responses as concise "book blips" and "brief synopses" that include "... enough information to give the reader a concept [or sense] of what the book is about." Teachers noted the presence of details and cited examples of details in responses. The number of details included in responses was described as ranging from "few" to "a lot." Teachers commented that details included by Grade 3 children frequently involved listing or recall and description of characters. They noted the number of characters mentioned in responses and cited examples of characters included. In addition, children were observed to describe both the characters and their actions in their responses, sometimes "associat[ing] roles with the characters' names." In my analysis of Grade 3 children's response statements I also found that responses consisted of descriptions of characters' actions and their appearance with most comments describing characters' actions. Teachers also noted that Grade 3 children sometimes included reasons for characters' actions, e.g., Patricia "gives reasons why raccoon didn't want Spring to come" in her response to Groundhog Day. Characters' dialogue was also sometimes included in responses.

Teachers described Grade 3 children's responses as containing main or important parts and events. It was observed, for example, that one child "picks out the important parts, e.g., *"All the prisoners were set free. One of them was Trina's and Francis' father*" when responding to Amanda Greenleaf and the Boy Magician. Teachers also gave general statements and cited examples of plot in Grade 3 children's responses. They infrequently referred to instances and examples of main idea in Grade 3 children's responses. One child's response to Ivy, that *"it was her dog, she wanted to take the dog out one more time and they get lost"* was described as the main idea. Only one negative comment was expressed regarding absence of the lesson.

Teachers also commented on children's comprehension of texts or the extent to which they understood the story and knew what the book was about. However, it was also observed that sometimes children's responses "didn't make sense," and "went off topic."

Personal

Fifteen percent of teachers' positive comments in term l and 11% of their positive comments in term 2 related to teacher read texts and 29% and 28% of teachers' positive comments in terms l and 2 respectively regarding responses to independently read texts referred to instances of personal responses. In term 2, teachers expressed only two concerns about Grade 3 children's difficulty in responding personally to texts read by teachers. Teachers described more personal responses following children's independent reading of texts as compared with responses to teacher-read texts. I also noted more engagement responses to texts read independently in term l. In my analysis, I found that 17% (term l) and 5% (term 2) of Grade 3 children's response statements to texts read independently were of an engagement nature while l0% (term l) and 8% (term 2) of their responses to teacher read texts were of an engagement nature. Most of children's engagement statements described feelings towards texts and character introspection.

Both positive comments and concerns referred to instances and examples of responses as consisting of opinions, feelings and personal comments about texts. Children's feelings and opinions described texts as likeable and interesting as noted, for example, in one child's response to Be My Valentine of *"I like that book because it's about 2 mice who wanted to be valentines and the mice become good friends*." In addition, Grade 3 children were observed to mention and give their opinion regarding favorite parts of texts. Samantha "stepped out" and objectified her reading experience by stating, "*I think it* [the text] *should be longer*." Reasons given by children for their feelings about texts were cited. For example, one child responded that he liked the story

Waiting for Whales *"because it's about whales and I like whales."* Sometimes teachers stated directly that Grade 3 children related texts to their personal experiences, and cited reasons for Grade 3 children's personal connections with texts as including texts' references to current events, holidays and favorite animals. However, Grade 3 children were also noted to sometimes "... not clarify [their] connection with [texts]" as was observed when one child "did not link for the reader how this girl cared for animals and he cares for animals." My analysis indicated that only 2% of Grade 3 children's responses in term 2 following independently read texts involved explanations through relating to their personal experiences. Examples of favorite parts mentioned by children were also cited as when a child responded that *"my favorite part [in Groundhog Day] was when Ronald Raccoon kidnapped the groundhog."*

Appearance

As Tables 7.1 and 7.2 illustrate, teachers commented most frequently in term 1 and second most frequently in term 2 regarding the appearance of Grade 3 children's responses following teacher-read texts. Thirty-seven percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 and 26% of their comments in term 2 noted the appearance or the story, sentence and word structure of Grade 3 children's responses to texts heard. In addition, as indicated in Table 7.5, 18% and 20% of teachers' positive comments in terms 1 and 2 respectively referred to the appearance of responses to independently read texts. Although a small sample of concerns in term 1 following independent and teacher reading of texts (5 and 4 concerns) was provided, the most frequent category of concerns in both terms involved the appearance of Grade 3 children's responses.

The majority of comments about appearance of Grade 3 children's responses were related to story structure including awareness of sequence, story sense and sufficient information and content "to give you a sense of what the book is about." The presence and examples of components of story structure, particularly beginnings and endings, were noted in responses. However, some Grade 3 children's responses were described as lacking endings and not bringing closure. Few teachers commented on the quality of endings or on the middles of texts in responses, although at times, teachers indicated when a combination of story structure locations was evident in responses as noted when one child "... got the whole story, e.g., has the beginning, middle and ending ..." Teachers also made general statements regarding the presence or absence of sequence in Grade 3 children's responses and identified connecting words and clauses including *"first, then, next, in a little while"* and *"when he was.*" The quality of sequence was described as "excellent" and as having "an easy flow of language." Teachers also commented on the length of responses.

Both positive comments and concerns were expressed about the nature of Grade 3 children's sentence structure in their responses. They were sometimes observed to use punctuation and complete and fluent sentences. Difficulties with sentence structure included omission of words and difficulty with consistent use of pronouns. Teachers infrequently described the nature of Grade 3 children's word structure including the richness of vocabulary and quality of spelling.

Other Factors

Although infrequent, 7% of teachers' positive comments in term 1 regarding responses to teacher read texts and one positive comment in term 2 about responses to independently read texts referred to other factors as affecting the quality of responses. Factors cited included nature of the task and skills of the children. It was noted, for example, that some responses followed the teacher's reading of the text while other responses were to books of children's own choosing.

General Evaluative

Seven percent of teachers' positive comments in term 1 regarding Grade 3 children's responses to teacher read texts and 9% of their positive comments in term 2 about responses to independently read texts were of a general evaluative nature. In addition, 25% of teachers' concerns in term 1 about responses to teacher read texts and 9% of their concerns in term 2 regarding responses to independently read texts were of a general evaluative nature. Teachers described Grade 3 children's responses as "good" and "interesting." Teachers also evaluated responses through their interaction with the children recording, for example, that "I would like to read this book. You made it sound so interesting."

Discussion of Results on Literature Responses

Similarities and differences in responses within and across Grade levels were observed as primary children demonstrated varied responses to literature. Other researchers have also found commonalities and differences in children's literature responses within and across grades (Bunbury, 1985; Kelly, 1990; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Beach, 1973).

Kinds of Responses

As indicated in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, both Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses were described as labeling of characters and titles with accompanying pictures. However, Kindergarten children were more frequently described as giving detailed pictures with labels, their drawings often reflecting text illustrations. As indicated in Tables 7.3 and 7.4, I also found that labeling was a frequent response for many Kindergarten children and that as the length of Grade 2 and 3 children's written responses increased, they labeled less often.

Through general statements, teachers described Grade 2 and 3 children's responses as containing retelling characteristics. Prior to or following their responses they were noted to give background or a summary for the reader including facts, incidents and details. In my analysis, I found that while Grade 2 and 3 children's responses contained retelling characteristics, Kindergarten and Grade 1 children were more likely to recall characters' appearances and their conversations. Grade 3 children's responses in Purves' (1975) study primarily involved literal aspects of text and contained a large number of literal retellings of texts. Applebee (1978) noted that children at the Pre-Operational Level do not differentiate between text and response resulting in responses of a retelling nature. Like Applebee (1978), Bunbury (1985) observed that 7 to 11 year old children responding at Pre-Operational and Concrete Operations Levels give literal responses limited to their experience and retell the whole story. Bunbury (1985) described 73% of 7 year old comments as at a very literal level as compared with 61% of 9 year olds and 35% of 11 year olds. Barone (1990) found that when responding to new texts, primary students often began with retellings while they sorted out the characters and determined the main plot.

In this study, Grade 3 children's responses were described as of an objective, literary nature. They mentioned text characteristics including what the author wrote about, the publisher, illustrations and number of chapters. In addition, Grade 2 children's favorite parts frequently involved literary features of texts including characters, structural language, illustrations and author. In my analysis, I considered some literary responses to be of an evaluative nature and I noted the beginning of literary evaluation in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses. Sutherland (1991) stated that even young children can respond to the language and content of a work. Kelly (1990) also observed that some Grade 3 children went beyond literal retelling and summarizing of events to comment on the author's style.

Content/Text Focus

Primary children were frequently described as including text content in their responses or as retelling text parts including main parts and events, main ideas, details and problem-solutions. I also found that the majority of children's responses were descriptive or focused on text content. Applebee (1978) noted that when responding to texts, children categorically evaluate texts or classify them into parts, e.g., characters, plot. Bunbury (1985) and Kiefer (1983) described Grade 1 and 2 children's responses as simple recalls of information stated in the text.

Detail ranging from a bare minimum to a lot, in primary children's responses and in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's illustrations, was one of the most commonly mentioned aspects of content. I also found details about characters to be the most frequent descriptive response. Bunbury (1985) reported that Grade 1 and 2 children respond to details of the story and that while students at the Formal Operations Stage can take a spectator stance, they also rely on textual details. Kelly (1990) observed that Grade 3 children's responses increased in detail over time.

Both teachers and I noted that primary children focused largely on descriptions of characters, their actions and dialogue. Yocom (1987) and Barone (1990) had also found that Grade 2 children respond to characters and to characters' actions. Sutherland (1991) noted that even young children respond to characters and character description.

Teachers found that primary children particularly Grade 3 children summarized text content. They described summaries as concise blips and brief synopses. Barone (1990) and Kelly (1990) in their research reported that Grade 2 and 3 children's oral and written responses changed from literal retelling to gradually more summarizing as they read the story and gained experience with responding.

Although there were minor differences across the grades, primary children's responses were noted to contain main parts, events and ideas. Teachers noted one to two main parts and events in responses and cited examples of main parts, events and ideas. Main parts and events were described as including plots, incidents, active parts and text endings. In her research, Kelly (1990) also found that Grade 3 children's oral responses were usually simple descriptive statements of one to two incidents from the text. Sutherland (1991) indicated that young children respond to the action of texts.

Although infrequent, teachers gave general statements regarding the presence and absence of comprehension of texts in Grade 3 children's responses. The extent to which they understood the story and made sense was also noted. Although teachers in this study did not frequently describe Grade 1 and 2 children's comprehension of texts, Bunbury (1985) noted that while only 19% of 7-year-old's comments were at an Inferential or Formal Operational Level as compared with 30% of 9-year-olds and 54% of 11-year-olds' comments, Grade 1 and 2 children who were at the Formal Operations Stage were capable of giving a broad range of inferential responses.

Personal

Teachers frequently described the personal nature of primary children's responses. This was particularly true for Grade 1 and 2 children's responses. Concerns were also expressed regarding the absence of personal responses, particularly in Kindergarten children's responses. Responses in this study were described as emotional feelings, consisting of statements regarding liking texts, personal views, opinions and wonderings. Responses were also noted to contain imaginative, descriptive language and sometimes extensions to texts heard. My analysis also indicated that primary children's responses were frequently of a personal or engagement nature. Like the teachers, I found that Grade 1 and 2 children often gave personal responses. The decrease in personal responses from Grade 2 to 3 was probably due to Grade 3 children's content and retelling-response emphasis.

In their research, Barone (1990) and Kiefer (1983) found that Grade 1 and 2 children expressed feelings and went beyond literal comprehension to give personal subjective responses. Kelly (1990) also observed a range of feelings in Grade 3 children's responses and noted that over time they increased in ability to express their feelings in words. Bunbury (1985) found that Grade 1 children included new elements not in the text but related to their experiences. The teachers in this study commented on views and opinions in Grade 2 and 3 children's responses while in other research, this was more evident for older students (Protherough, 1983; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Purves & Rippere, 1968).

Teachers noted the presence of favorite parts particularly in Grade 1 and 2 children's responses. The teachers and I both noted that favorite parts included specific characters and their actions. Although teachers in this study commented on children's identification and description of characters, Barone (1990) and Bunbury (1985) also reported that Grade 1 and 2 children empathized with the characters, judged their conduct and compared themselves with the characters. I found that while primary children infrequently assessed characters' actions or gave introspective insights into their thoughts and motivations, Kindergarten children were beginning to engage in these behaviors. Other researchers noted that older children make personal connections with characters, reflect upon and form opinions regarding characters' actions and compare themselves with the characters (Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Five, 1986; Purves, 1975).

Another favorite part of texts described by teachers in this study included literary features of texts consisting of text structure, text language and illustrations. Although infrequent, I also found that Kindergarten and Grade 1 children discussed text illustrations while Grade 2 children responded to text language and the author. Yocom (1987) reported that Grade 2 children responded to text illustrations and Kelly (1990) noted that Grade 3 children identified favorite styles of literature.

Although there were minor differences across the grades, primary children were infrequently described as relating personal experiences including experiences with literature to texts. I also found that with the exception of Grade 1 children, primary children discussed few connections between texts and their personal experiences. Applebee (1978) noted that children evaluated texts in terms of their real life experiences and Grade 1, 2 and 3 children's responses to texts were found by other researchers to be related to their world and personal experiences (Bunbury, 1985; Barone, 1990; Yocom, 1987; Kelly, 1990).

Although generally not frequent, except for Grade 2, teachers noted that Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 children gave reasons for their feelings regarding texts and for their favorite parts. Teachers did not comment on Grade 3 children's use of reasons and concerns were expressed regarding primary children's lack of reasons in responses. I noted the beginning of explanations in Kindergarten children's responses as they relied on texts to give explanations for favorite characters' actions and parts. I found differences in the nature of reasons across the primary grades as, for example, Grade 1 children gave descriptive and engagement reasons while Grade 2 children's reasons were generally for their favorite parts. Applebee (1978) noted that as children grew older there was a clearer difference between liking and judging. However, generally the children in this study continued to discuss liking text features without giving reasons for their favorite parts of texts. Purves (1975) also observed that Grade 3 children did not elaborate much on what they read. Bunbury (1985) reported that 7 to 11 year old children's ability to use supporting details from text or from personal experiences as reasons depended upon their level of cognitive development.

Appearance

Teachers expressed frequent comments and concerns regarding the appearance of primary children's responses. They described the word, sentence and story structure of primary children's responses with more frequent reference to story structure. Although different aspects of story structure were emphasized across the grades, teachers at all Grade levels described the length of stories, sequence and sense of story structure. In her research with Grade 3 children, Kelly (1990) found that their written responses increased in length over time as children wrote more elaborate summaries. Galda (1980) also observed differences in children's understanding of the concept of story or the structure of story elements.

Sentences ranged from incomplete and simple to complete and complex. Teachers noted that primary children used punctuation, word spacing and connectors. Beginnings, middles and endings of sentences were described with most reference to beginnings and endings. Teachers noted the extent to which words were spelled correctly, the locations of letters and sounds with more facility noted with word beginnings. This was particularly commented on in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses. Teachers expressed only two concerns about Grade 3 children's spelling difficulties. Kelly (1990) also found fewer errors in Grade 3 children's spelling.

Other Factors

Although infrequent, teachers described other factors which they believed affected the quality and amount of primary children's literature responses including the nature of the response task and teacher factors, texts used and child factors. The difficulty of the response task and children's understanding of the nature of the task was noted to affect responses. Teachers' instructional approaches including the amount of time given to complete responses, emphasis on literature discussions, nature of instructions and whether texts were read by teacher or independently chosen were cited as affecting the quality of responses. Applebee (1978) and Purves and Beach (1992) emphasized the importance of sufficient time for the development of a response. Bunbury (1985) indicated that familiarity with the response task and amount of instruction about responses affected 7 to 11 year old children's responses.

Children's interest in and familiarity with the text were occasionally noted by teachers in the study as contributing to the quality of Grade 2 children's literature responses. Kiefer (1983) reported that Grade 1 and 2 children's responses changed with individual texts. Wollman-Bonilla (1989), Valencia and Peters (1991) and Cianciolo (1989) noted that texts should be interesting enough to evoke some response, should reflect the reader's experiences, preoccupations and concerns and allow personal application of text ideas.

The nature of text language was another factor which teachers in the study believed to affect Grade 2 children's responses. Bunbury (1985) also noted that the structure of texts used with 7 to 11 year olds may be significant and that children's responses to genre were affected by the language difficulties of texts. Other researchers have indicated that children respond to well written texts containing vivid language that enables them to visualize the characters, action, setting and atmosphere (Galda, 1980; Hancock, 1993b; Wollman-Bonilla, 1991). Valencia (1990b) recommended naturally occurring whole texts that are well organized.

Teachers indicated that children's writing skills, personality and attention span affected the quality and length of their responses. Kiefer (1983) noted that sometimes Grade 1 and 2 children's responses reflected their inadequate vocabulary. Personal preferences, interests, and perceptions of self as a reader were also mentioned as influencing responses (Wollman-Bonilla, 1991; Pryor, 1996).

Summary

In summary, children's literature responses across the primary grades have similar general characteristics, although the extent and nature of the characteristics vary at and across Grade levels. The teachers and I found that responses contained text content including details regarding characters' descriptions, actions and dialogue as well as main parts, events and ideas. Teachers noted that Grade 2 and 3 children's responses often involved retelling parts of texts and I found that Kindergarten and Grade 1 children also recalled characters' appearances and conversations. Teachers commented that Grade 2 and 3 children's responses frequently described literary features of texts and I noted evidence of the beginning of literary evaluation in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses.

Sometimes consistency within individual grades across terms was found as in Grade 2 and 3 children's descriptions of characters' actions and Grade 1 children's descriptions of favorite parts. At other times, the nature of responses varied within grades and children did not always respond consistently, fluctuations being visible from one term to another. Teachers' comments on the objective or literary nature of Grade 3 children's responses increased across terms and I found that Grade 2 children's responses about favorite parts and actions decreased throughout the year. Teachers noted Kindergarten children's recall of characters' conversations in term 1 whereas characters' descriptions were frequently described in term 2. Similarly, Grade 3 children's personal responses consisted largely of feelings in term 1 and included personal experiences in term 2. Galda (1982) has described the "erratic progression" of readers' meaning-making when responding to literature. Kiefer (1983) noted that Grade 1 and 2 children's responses can change over time and Purves (1975) found that students were more likely to respond consistently across texts as they got older.

Differences were noted across grades regarding the content nature of responses. Teachers more frequently commented on the inclusion of main parts and events in Grade 1 children's responses whereas in Grade 3, summaries, generalization and comprehension were noted. Grade 2 and 3 children also included retellings and objective or literary comments in their responses while Kindergarten children often labelled with illustrations.

The teachers and I frequently described the personal nature of primary children's responses. While teachers commented particularly on Grade 1 and 2 children's responses, I also noted the beginning of introspective insights in Kindergarten children's responses. We found that all primary children infrequently related personal experiences to texts and were concerned regarding the absence of reasons in primary children's responses. However, differences in the nature of personal responses were also noted as Kindergarten children assessed characters and gave introspective insights into characters' thoughts, Grade 1 and 2 children responded to favorite parts while views and opinions were more frequent in Grade 2 and 3 children's responses. In addition, we found that Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's favorite parts were often text illustrations whereas Grade 2 children commented on preferred text language. Grade 3 children gave reasons for favorite parts while Grade 2 children's reasons often included feelings regarding texts.

Teachers frequently described the appearance of primary children's responses with most frequent reference to the story structure of responses. Word structure was more frequently mentioned in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses and story structure in Grade 3 children's responses. Overall, the majority of children's responses were content and personal focused. Hancock (1993a) found an equal balance between immersion in content and self-involvement. However, both teachers and I noted more descriptive than engagement responses in the majority of grades.

CHAPTER 8

Summary, Major Findings, Discussion and Implications

Summary

My study was designed to explore i) what informal assessment techniques were being used by primary teachers to assess reading in Newfoundland and what procedures they thought they should be using, ii) how primary teachers analyzed information obtained from running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses, iii) the degree of consistency between teachers' and my analyses of diagnostic information, and iv) the nature of developmental trends in reading as indicated in the four assessment strategies.

Ten primary teachers of language arts in Newfoundland were chosen for the study. The teachers and I collected information on 10 students at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 3 as well as in primary Special Education classrooms. In addition, teachers discussed assessment techniques they were using and felt they should be using, analyzed reading samples, and described the contexts, texts and learners involved in the study. The data were collected from September to June of one school year and shared during individual and group meetings.

Teachers' comments regarding characteristics of teacher-based assessment and specific assessment techniques used and recommended were analyzed separately from their descriptions of children's reading. I systematically analyzed teachers' descriptions of children's reading samples at each grade level using Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (Spradley, 1980) in order to arrive at common major organizing domains across grades for running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses. I then calculated the frequency of teachers' positive and negative comments for the domains.

I also analyzed children's reading samples. For running records, I used an adapted form of Goodman and Burke's (1970) miscue analysis. For oral and written retellings, I employed an adapted form of categories developed by Drum and Lantaff (1977), Furniss (1979) and Fagan (1989) and also noted the extent of recall of beginning, middle and ending parts of texts. Finally, children's literature responses were analyzed using categories based on the literature and adapted through application to children's response statements in this study. Comparisons were made between my analysis and those of the teachers.

Major Findings

Major findings are presented in relation to each of the purposes set out above.

Assessment Techniques Newfoundland Teachers Were and Thought they Should be Using

Informal assessment techniques frequently used by teachers included writing samples, oral reading, questions, checklists and in-the-head observations. Less frequently used techniques included literature responses, oral and written retellings, cloze passages, Concepts About Print subtests, research and group projects, silent reading, formal tests and workbook pages. Although teachers felt that they should be using writing samples, questions, Concepts About Print, silent reading, art, cloze, research and group projects and surveys, these assessment tasks were not chosen for the study. Assessment techniques recommended for the study consisted of running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses. Selection of these assessment strategies was consistent with findings of a 1992 provincial survey of Grades 4, 5 and 6 teachers in which approximately 55% to 60% of teachers considered oral reading and informal reading inventories important, 60% of teachers noted the importance of response journals and 65% of teachers recognized retellings and paraphrasing as important (Department of Education, Newfoundland, 1992b).

Changes in Views on Assessment

Although not an initial purpose of the study, it became apparent that teachers changed their views of assessment as the study progressed. At the beginning of the study, teachers chose assessment techniques that they believed to be enjoyable, part of daily instruction, not too time consuming, learner-centred and which comprehensively described the whole child. As teachers used and reflected on teacher-based reading assessment strategies, they recognized that assessment should allow greater student involvement and that students should be informed of the objectives of each assessment task and involved in choosing their assessment samples. They also gradually emphasized process assessment and fewer pencil and paper assessment tasks. At the beginning of the study, teachers were recording their observations in their heads but gradually realized the need for written anecdotal records in addition to numerical records. As teachers used running records, retellings and literature responses, the usefulness and limitations of these assessment tasks became more apparent. They noted the impracticability of wordless picture books and written retellings as well as children's dislike of written retellings.

Running records were viewed as giving useful information regarding cueing systems and strategies.

Initially, teachers were unaware of the importance, purposes and criteria of assessment tasks but gradually realized the need to "know beforehand what you're looking for" and to focus only on limited criteria in each assessment sample. They changed their opinions regarding assessment criteria and learned, for example, to distinguish between the purposes of literature responses and retellings. They realized that retellings were not a test of memory or ability "to retell everything," but an assessment of comprehension including ability to summarize.

As they used and reflected on the assessment techniques, teachers became more informed and gave more analytical and specific comments about children's reading often asking, for example, more specific questions about use of the cuing systems and text structure. From being involved in the study, teachers developed a realization of the importance of choosing appropriate texts for running records, retellings and responses.

How Teachers Analyzed Children's Reading Samples

Major findings related to specific assessment techniques are presented first followed by findings on "other factors" which affected performance on all reading samples. This section ends with a synthesis of findings across assessment tasks.

Running records. At all grade levels, teachers focused heavily on children's use of contextual cues when analysing running records. Of all types of contextual cues, teachers most frequently described children's facility with using their oral language to make sense through substituting their own everyday familiar oral language and common expressions. In contrast, teachers infrequently described primary children as using graphic, phonic and meaning cues. When they did comment on children's use of graphic and phonic cues, they noted use of cues in word beginnings more than in middles or endings, and also that graphic and phonic cues were used in combination with other strategies.

Oral and written retellings. Story structure was a major focus of teachers' analyses of children's retellings, with many comments related to location of information recalled. Consistent with findings in other studies, primary children were noted to recall beginnings of texts, particularly setting and characters (Anderson, 1993; Rhodes & Shanklin, 1993; Smith & Keister, 1996). While teachers gave few comments regarding recall of middles of texts in oral retellings, information from text middles, including details, problems and events, was frequently noted in written retellings. Endings were infrequently recalled for all age groups, consistent with Mandler and Johnson's (1977) and Galda's (1982) earlier findings. Although less frequent than location of information, sequencing of events in a coherent or logical order was also a focus of teachers' concerns and comments.

In addition to the focus on story structure, primary children were noted to rely on text information to retell stories, their recalls often being word-for-word from texts. Teachers expressed more concerns regarding children's difficulty with recall of text information in written than oral retellings. The extent to which primary children went beyond text information and relied on their own knowledge and language to give personal reactions, express feelings towards texts or make inferences was viewed as limited in both oral and written retellings. These findings are similar to those of Tierney, Bridge and Cera (1978/79) and Brake (1981) who reported more explicit than inferred information in free recalls.

Literature responses. When analysing responses to literature, teachers primarily focused on content. Although there were minor differences across the grades, responses were frequently described as containing main parts and events, main ideas, details and problems-solutions. Detail was one of the most commonly mentioned aspects of content throughout the primary grades. Other researchers have found that 7 to 11 year old children often give literal responses limited to their experience (Bunbury, 1985). In addition to the focus on text content, teachers in this study frequently described the word structure as well as length and sequence of primary children's responses.

Although less frequent, primary children's responses, especially those of Grade 1 and 2 children, were sometimes described as being personal in nature. Children noted their favourite parts, gave feelings about texts, expressed personal views and opinions, used imaginative descriptive language and extended texts heard. However, they were infrequently described as relating personal experiences, including experiences with literature, to texts, and teachers were concerned regarding the absence of reasons in responses.

Other factors in reading. As they endeavoured to describe the whole child, teachers recognized other important factors including the nature of the child, text and task as affecting performance on running records, retellings and literature responses. Other researchers have also recognized a dynamic interplay of factors as determining primary children's reading (Chinn et al., 1993; K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977; Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Bunbury, 1985; Y. Goodman, 1991; Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989; Valencia, 1990b; Cianciolo, 1988).

Teachers described children's self-confidence, familiarity with and interest in the topic, genre or task and home and previous grade experiences as affecting running records, retellings and responses. The nature of primary children's oral and written language, memory, reading ability, personality, attention span, listening skills and use of personal experiences were also described as affecting reading performance.

Teachers were concerned that the nature of texts used in the study interfered with primary children's reading performance. Long texts that lacked plot or contained an inappropriate number of episodes were described as difficult for retellings. The extent to which texts contained meaningful contextual cues or supports were noted to determine children's use of contextual and meaning cues, and texts containing a large number of unfamiliar words, phrases and expressions were described as hindering oral reading. Unusual or unfamiliar sentence structure, redundant unnatural language, and uninteresting or unfamiliar content were also noted to hinder use of contextual cues in running records and to negatively affect oral retellings. Predictable story structure was found to support syntactic and semantic cue utilization and retellings. Other researchers have also noted that text structure or organization affected retellings and readers' construction of meaning (Irwin & Mitchell, 1983; Y. Goodman, 1992c). Some researchers have found that the average number of miscues varies with the difficulty of texts (Kibby, 1979) while others (Christie & Alonso, 1980; Gonzales & Elijah, 1975;

Schlieper, 1977, and Hutson & Niles, 1973) noted that complexity or difficulty level of passages had little effect on the quantity of primary children's miscues. Teachers in this study also noted the presence as well as the extent to which text illustrations provided strong and clear contextual cues and affected written retellings and oral reading, particularly for Kindergarten and Grade 1 children. While Tierney and Cunningham (1984) maintain that there is no evidence that pictures aid comprehension, Chesnov (1994) reported that illustrations tie together and emphasize parts of stories including characters, objects and locations and provide clues for understanding characters' words and actions.

The nature or difficulty of assessment tasks as well as children's familiarity with and understanding of the tasks of retelling and responding to texts were noted by teachers in the study to contribute to reading performance. Bunbury (1985) also reported that familiarity with the response task affected children's responses. Teachers in the study described teaching approaches including provision of prior reading, access to texts during retelling, nature of instructions and amount of time given to complete the reading task as affecting the quality of primary children's reading. While Y. Goodman (1989) recognized that there is no one-to-one correspondence between what is taught and what is learned, several of the unexpected findings in this study about primary children's reading could perhaps be attributed to teaching approach(s). For example, Grade 3 children's responses were described as less personal than Grade 1 and 2 children's responses and, unlike younger primary children, Grade 3 children infrequently gave reasons for favourite parts. Teachers' approaches may have contributed to Kindergarten children's ability to compare themselves with characters, to assess characters' actions and give more introspective insights into their thoughts and motivation as well as to Grade 1 children's frequent connections between texts and their personal experiences.

Synthesis. Combining information across running records, retellings and literature responses revealed both similarities and differences in how teachers viewed children's reading. They focused heavily on context cues, particularly children's use of language to predict words on running records, but were far more concerned with reliance on text than use of knowledge to go beyond texts on the other tasks, particularly retellings. Whereas they focused on meaning more than graphic cues in running records, most comments and concerns dealt with content or recall of text in retellings and responses to literature. This reflects a tendency to view reading from a top-down perspective on running records and a bottom-up perspective on retellings and responses to literature. However, even though teachers focused heavily on text when analysing both retellings and literature responses, there were some differences in what aspects of texts they considered most important. In retellings, the major focus was on text structure or organization with somewhat less attention to content. In responses, the major focus was on content with less attention to structure. In neither did they focus as heavily on use of personal knowledge as much as they had on running records. Various reasons could be proposed for teachers' differences in emphasis on running records, retellings and responses. It may be that because teachers were less familiar with retellings and responses, they concentrated their efforts on the mechanics or mastering the routines of these tasks and gave less attention to reflection on the purposes of the assessment strategies (Hall & Hord, 1987). Listening to children read, on the other hand, was a more familiar task and some professional development had been provided regarding miscue analysis and running records.

There was considerable similarity across assessment tasks in teachers' comments on other factors affecting reading performance. On all assessment tasks, they talked about child, text and task variables although the major focus was on how the nature of the text could facilitate or hinder reading. This is consistent with the heavy text focus in analyses of children's retellings and responses to literature noted above.

Consistency and Inconsistency Between Teachers' and my Analyses

Comparison between teachers' descriptive comments and my analysis indicated considerable consistency in findings about children's running records, oral and written retellings and literature responses. However, there were also some differences, particularly in running records.

Running records. Teachers commented most frequently on primary children's use of contextual cues whereas I found that children at all primary grades used graphic cues more frequently than other cueing systems. Neither the teachers nor I found that children were able to consistently maintain the author's meaning.

Retellings. There was considerable similarity between my analysis and teachers' interpretations of children's awareness of story structure in retellings. We both found that primary children recalled more information from text beginnings than other locations. We also observed that text middles were more frequently recalled in written than oral retellings and that text endings were rarely recalled. However, I did find that text middles were more often recalled than teachers' comments indicated, especially for Grade 1 and 2 children. Other points of agreement regarding children's retellings involved heavy reliance on text information, especially at the Grade 1 and 2 levels, and limited utilization of background experiences and knowledge at all grades. Pronger, Johnson and Yore (1985) also found that personal involvement was rare in Grade l children's recalls. However, although teachers described Grade 3 children's written retellings as containing slightly more beyond text than text information, my analysis of clausal units indicated more units of a text focus nature.

Responses. Both the teachers and I found that the majority of primary children's responses were descriptive or focused on text content. Kindergarten and Grade l children frequently responded by labelling characters and titles with accompanying pictures and Grade 2 and 3 children by recalling descriptions of characters, their actions and dialogue, main parts, events and ideas. Yocum (1987), Barone (1990) and Sutherland (1991) also concluded that primary children respond to characters, their actions and descriptions. The teachers and I both found that details were children's most frequent descriptive response, similar to findings by Bunbury (1985) and Kelly (1990). Although Barone (1990) and Kelly (1990) described primary children's responses to texts as related to their world and personal experiences, we found that primary children rarely related personal experiences to texts. However, their responses especially those of Grade l and 2 children, sometimes contained other personal or engagement characteristics such as favourite parts.

Synthesis. Overall, teachers' analyses of primary children's literature responses and retellings were very similar to my analysis of results on the assessment tasks.

Perhaps this is not surprising in that we worked together in several group and individual meetings to discuss children's reading samples. There might have been more differences if the study had not been collaborative and teachers had worked independently from me. In this light, the extent of the differences between teachers and my analyses of running records are difficult to explain. It may be that we did not collaborate as much regarding running records since teachers seemed to feel more confident completing running records. Listening to children read was an everyday occurrence and they had received professional development regarding miscue analysis and running records. On the other hand, retellings and literature responses were new assessment strategies for several teachers and they might have been more influenced by our discussions. We did not spend much time on discussion or reflection regarding the theoretical foundation of language acquisition including integration of cueing systems. In addition, teachers may have been still very much at a mechanical stage regarding running records and were concerned with recording miscues rather than with analyzing miscues or understanding the importance of utilization of all cuing systems (Hall & Hord, 1987; Elliott, 1992). Moreover, as a reaction to the over-use of phonics workbooks and exercises, graphophonics skills had been de-emphasized during provincial and district professional development efforts.

The Nature of Developmental Trends in Reading

Both teachers' and my analyses revealed more commonalities than differences in primary children's running records, oral and written retellings and responses to literature although the extent and nature of the similarities varied within and across grade levels.

Running records. Teachers at all grade levels described children as making heavy use of context cues and less use of grapho-phonic cues. Both the teachers and I found an increase in children's utilization of graphic cues from Kindergarten to Grade 2, and the percentages of teachers' comments increased from Grade 1 to 2 regarding utilization of phonic cues. With the exception of Grade 2 children, use of contextual cues also increased across the grades, and there was also a slight increase in children's ability to maintain the author's meaning from Grade 1 to 3. Another developmental trend involved use of picture cues, with more reference to Kindergarten and Grade 1 than older children using picture cues. Teachers reported few differences across grades in the impact of the nature of the child, text and strategy variables on children's running records across grades.

Retellings. Teachers' descriptions of oral and written retellings contained more similarities than differences across the primary grade levels and hence, few developmental trends were evident. All primary children, particularly those in Grades 2 and 3, recalled text beginnings although Grade 3 children recalled more information than younger children from middles of texts. All primary children's recalls were described as constrained by texts, but there was somewhat less reliance on texts by Grade 2 and 3 children as they used more of their background knowledge when retelling. Tierney, Bridge and Cera (1978/1979) have reported that Grade 3 children are capable of recalling textually inferred information and Pronger, Johnson and Yore (1985) noted that the reaction category is rarely found in Grade 1 children's recalls. As in running records, Kindergarten and Grade 1 children in this study interpreted and used text pictures more than older primary children. While teachers commented on similar aspects of comprehension across the primary grades, Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings were described as including more summaries, inferences, main ideas, problems and resolutions than those of younger children. Golden (1984) and Farr et al. (1990) also found that third graders can summarize events and give main ideas and topic focus.

Literature responses. Few distinct developmental trends were evident in children's responses to literature across the primary grades. There was some decrease across the grades in children's use of descriptive or content statements, and a shift from labelling characters and recalling characters' appearances and conversations in Kindergarten and Grade 1 to increased inclusion of text details, main parts and summaries in responses of children in Grade 2 and 3. In relation to the personal nature of primary children's responses, children at all grade levels noted favourite parts of texts. Kindergarten and Grade l children's favourite parts usually involved literary features of text illustrations whereas Grade 2 children commented on preferred text language and author and Grade 3 children gave reasons for favourite parts and feelings about texts. I found some differences in the nature of reasons given across the primary grades with Kindergarten children giving explanations for favourite characters' actions and parts, Grade l children giving descriptive and engagement reasons and Grade 2 children citing their favourite parts without giving reasons. I also noted the beginning of responses of a literary nature in Kindergarten and Grade l children's responses which continued throughout Grade 2 and 3. In relation to the structure of responses, word structure was more frequently mentioned in Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's responses and story structure in Grade 3 children's responses.

Although developmental trends were evident in literature responses, there were also fluctuations in teachers' comments within grades and from one grade to another and inconsistencies in my analysis within grades. For example, Grade 2 children's responses to favourite parts and actions decreased throughout the year, and Grade 3 children's responses consisted largely of feelings in term 1 and personal experiences in term 2. Galda (1982) has also described the "erratic progression" of readers' meaning-making when responding to literature. Tierney (1998) advises that we "should not expect that students will always appear to reveal the same level of sophistication with skills and strategies or necessarily use the same skills and strategies" (p. 385).

Synthesis. Overall, the informal assessment techniques used in this study revealed some developmental trends in reading across the primary grades but there was considerable overlap across grades and differences within grades. In retrospect, this is not surprising. The major purpose of informal reading assessment techniques is to collect diagnostic rather than normative data. Results on informal assessment techniques are more useful for describing the unique reading profile and needs of individual children than comparing or ranking children in relation to one another.

Another reason there were few developmental trends is that data were analyzed by grade level. There were significant individual differences among children in their reading abilities within any one grade because of the way the sample was selected. Teachers were asked to select children at high, average and low reading levels within each grade and the inclusion of special education students increased the range of reading abilities even more. Hence, comparing children at different grade levels rather than at different reading levels may have served to mask rather than illuminate developmental trends in reading.

Implications for Practice

This study focused on informal assessment, and implications of the results for assessment practices are presented below. However, the results also have significant implications for educational change and helping teachers achieve consistency between their instructional practices and beliefs. A theme permeating this entire section is professional development, with a focus on both the content and nature of effective professional development experiences for teachers.

Assessment Practices

This study confirmed that teachers' comments provide valuable information to assess children's reading samples. Many of their anecdotal descriptions of children's reading were consistent with criteria considered important by other researchers. Because teachers' anecdotal comments arose from the classroom context and they engaged in reflection as they described children's reading, teachers gained a better understanding of the assessment-instruction process. Their comments also had direct relevance and implications for instructional use ensuring more expeditious use of the assessment information collected. However, through teachers' explicit comments regarding primary children's reading, the following professional development needs related to assessment were identified.

The first relates to the use of mental rather than written records. At the beginning of this study, several teachers were making mental notes on each child or recording observations in their heads. While it is recognized that the teacher's head is an important evaluation record and that teachers unconsciously interpret and make follow-up decisions (Turbill, 1994; Cambourne, Turbill & Dal Santo, 1994b), teachers need support to record observations and to make comments that go beyond general evaluative comments, the number of words missed during oral reading, reading level and the amount of text recalled. They need assistance in understanding how reliance on a single score or level "masks variability and individuality" (Tierney, 1998, p. 382). They also need help in keeping written records until written recording becomes a natural process and until they develop confidence in their own judgments. Because teachers lacked confidence in their own judgments and were uncertain as to what reading behaviours to comment on, they needed probing to generate additional "in-the-head" information.

Another area for professional development involves running records. Although teachers were inclined to write lengthy descriptions about children's miscues when probed, they did not feel comfortable completing miscue analysis. The extent of inconsistencies between teachers' comments on running records and my miscue analysis suggests a need for teachers to employ a more systematic process. In addition, teachers need opportunities to reflect on the importance of all the cueing systems and on the author's meaning.

Perhaps of more concern, however, is the need for greater understanding of response to literature and retelling assessment strategies. Teachers did not consistently recognize the importance of personal responses to literature across the grades, and I found that children's literature responses were of a more descriptive than engagement nature in the majority of grades. Teachers need further information on the nature of reader response in order to help children relate personal experiences to texts, empathize with the characters, judge their conduct, compare themselves with characters, give introspective insights into characters' thoughts and motivations, and provide reasons for their feelings and favourite parts of texts. While teachers discussed children's utilization of cues beyond the text when reading orally, they did not as frequently describe children as using these cues when retelling and responding to literature. Greater teacher emphasis on utilization of beyond text cues in retellings and literature responses is needed. In addition, teachers also need to adjust their expectations for different grades. The teachers in this study did not realize, for example, that summarizing was an important retelling criterion for older children, while verbatim recall was more typical of younger primary children.

In a previous study, only one-third of primary and elementary teachers in Newfoundland responding to provincial questionnaires felt well prepared to assess children's reading progress (Canning, 1996). The process of sharing, discussing and reflecting used in this study provides an alternative to traditional inservice programs to help teachers become informed regarding teacher-based assessment strategies. As a result of sharing information, for example, some assessment techniques teachers were using including questions, checklists, cloze passages, formal tests and workbook pages were not recommended for the study. Instead, less frequently used assessment strategies of retellings and literature responses were recommended. Through sharing, teachers recognized the need as well as the purposes of a wider range of process assessment tasks.

Beliefs and Practices

Teachers in this study identified themselves as whole language teachers, consistent with expectations from an earlier provincial study which reported that over 90% of the province's Grade 2 teachers were committed to the whole language philosophy (Bulcock, 1991). Many of the teachers' views on assessment and their analyses of children's reading were consistent with whole language philosophy, e.g., heavy focus on contextual cues in running records.

At times, however, teachers' comments appeared to be more a reflection of whole language philosophy than of what the children were actually doing as they read. This was most evident in running records where my analysis indicated that all primary children used graphic cues more frequently than other cueing systems, but teachers infrequently described primary children as using graphic cues. In addition, I did not find that primary children were using contextual cues to the extent that teachers indicated.

Such differences may indicate that the reality of children's "experiential curriculum" was different from their "operational curriculum" or what teachers were actually teaching (Goodlad et al., 1970, p. 63). It would appear that although teachers identified themselves as whole language teachers and emphasized the importance of contextual cues, not all of their practices (as reflected in children's oral reading behaviour) were consistent with whole language philosophy.

It is also possible that teachers altered the form and changed their language to fit the language of the innovation (in this case whole language) but maintained the status quo in their beliefs and practices (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1987). Teachers' language seemed to be consistent with Department of Education documents in Newfoundland which contained little, if any, emphasis on word attack skills. Canning (1996) concluded that teachers received the message that direct instruction in word analysis was incompatible with whole language principles. Primary children's heavy reliance in this study on graphophonic cues and limited reliance on contextual cues is consistent with much earlier findings (Boettcher, 1977 and Rhodes, 1979) but not with whole language philosophy.

Discrepancy was apparent on other assessment techniques as well. Although teachers described themselves as whole language teachers, they referred to children's recall of and responses to text features more than utilization of personal experiences in retellings and literature responses. This seems to reflect what Church (1996) refers to as "whole language dress up" in which whole language types of activities are in place but with little sense of the purpose behind them.

In addition, even though teachers expressed the belief that assessment tasks should involve children through "... allow[ing] them choice regarding how they would like to respond to assessment," teachers allowed children little choice in assessment tasks used in the study. In a provincial study (Department of Education, 1992b) of elementary teachers, less than 25% of teachers at this level encouraged student participation in group or peer conferences. Tierney (1998) also concluded that teachers rarely engaged children in learning how to assess themselves.

McKay (1993) hypothesized two reasons for whole language not making much difference in the teaching of reading and writing and other teaching/learning activities. She indicated that our current practices may be incongruent with our beliefs, or we may not really believe what we say we do, holding other beliefs to guide our practice. Fullan (1991) also describes an implementation stage where practices do not yet match beliefs. This is perhaps not surprising in light of the fact that many teachers received their preservice education before whole language was introduced into university teacher training programmes. In addition, inservice in Newfoundland, as in Nova Scotia, has focused mostly on methodology or procedures and has lacked theory or essential information regarding literacy resulting in a fragmented eclectic mix of whole language practices and techniques (Church, 1996).

Teachers need opportunities to further refine their understanding of reading. Despite the fact that Bulcock (1991) noted that Grade 2 teachers in the province felt prepared to teach using whole language methods, these findings probably reflected teachers' degree of comfort with the teacher's manual of the Nelson Networks Program since this Program was predominantly used to implement whole language. In 1996, through interviews, discussions and questionnaires, Canning found that primary teachers in the province indicated that they had not received adequate inservice in the philosophy and instructional approaches of whole language.

Professional development is needed that adds to teachers' developing theoretical framework regarding whole language and that grounds whole language in a broadly based, ever changing theoretical framework. Various forms of professional development should be provided that involve teachers in meaningful collaboration with peers and professionals and allow negotiated construction of meaning (Church, 1996). Inservices including classroom assistance, regular meetings to discuss progress, teacher observation of other teachers, teacher inquiry, dialogue and reflection are needed (Elliott, 1992). Fullan (1991) emphasizes that it is not the amount of staff training but the ongoing support from district and department that is critical. These experiences would help teachers to clarify the meaning of assessment and whole language and to questions their assumptions. Fullan (1991) and Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) note that teachers' perspectives have been ignored and their importance to the change process underestimated.

Implications for Theory

Although the focus of this study was on assessment practices, the results do have some implications for theory. Perhaps most obvious is confirmation of the need for teachers to base both assessment and instructional practices on a coherent theoretical framework. At times, it appeared that teachers in this study adopted assessment techniques without understanding either the purposes or procedures for those practices. In addition, however, the results also have implications for change and reading theory.

Educational Change

Inconsistencies evident in implementation of whole language principles by teachers in this study reflect what is known about educational change. The results are similar to those of Newman (cited by Church, 1996) who noted that,

> "Aside from superficial changes, the complex orchestration of cueing systems and strategies required for proficient reading and writing were never fully understood or appreciated by the majority of teachers who came to call themselves whole language teachers" (p. xii).

This partial understanding is reflected in what Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) describe as "fragmented solutions" (p. 4). They identify this as the number one problem in implementing initiatives.

As Newman (cited by Church, 1996) suggests, the teachers in this study may have needed more time to assimilate the complexity of ideas and arguments underlying a whole language framework. Several theorists have described changing teaching approaches and beliefs as difficult and often of only short duration (Elliott, 1992; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1987; Fullan & Park, 1981).

Theorists have also noted that teachers do not automatically integrate practices into belief systems. Beliefs must be confirmed, acquired, refined and assessed during and after teaching approaches (Hall & Hord, 1987). Changing beliefs has been noted as extremely difficult to bring about because they are not explicit and are at the "level of unconscious assumptions" (Fullan & Park, 1981, p.9). McKay (1993) recognizes that teachers need to articulate their beliefs regarding whole language and not just change their teaching practices. Because teachers change their teaching practices, she notes that this does not necessarily mean they have changed their beliefs. This may have accounted for some of the inconsistencies between beliefs and practices evident in this study.

Change theorists have also noted that when professional development concentrated on theory, teachers were often not ready for it and were more concerned with mechanical use of the innovation, with what the innovation meant in personal terms (Fullan, 1991; Hall & Hord, 1987). In order to ground their assessment and instructional practices in a theoretical framework, the teachers in this study may need ongoing opportunities to reflect on and reconstruct their own personal theories, concerns and applications.

Reading Development

One of the purposes of this study was to explore the nature of developmental trends in reading as indicated by four informal assessment strategies. The results on running records (oral reading miscues) were consistent with those in the literature regarding the nature of reading development. Similar to Clay (1991), the teachers in this study generally described increasing use of reading cues and strategies across the primary grades. With the exception of Grade 2, teachers noted increased use of graphic, phonic and contextual cues.

There were fewer developmental trends on retellings although teachers did note increased use of summarization in Grade 2 and 3 children's retellings. Few researchers have examined the literature responses of primary children, and hence, this study makes a unique contribution to understanding of developmental trends in young children's response to literature. Teachers described changes in the kinds of responses given by children across the primary grades. Kindergarten and Grade 1 children labelled characters and provided titles with pictures whereas children in Grades 2 and 3 tended to give retellings and literary responses. Some decrease across the grades in children's use of descriptive or content statements was also evident.

Overall, however, there were many similarities across the grades in how teachers described children's reading, particularly on retellings and literature responses. These results do not support stage theories of reading (e.g., Chall, 1983b). Instead they are consistent with Clay's (1991) observation that each child's sequence of integrated skills differs depending on the child's strengths, needs and experiences.

Reading as an Interactive Process

Teachers in this study included three major components of interactive theories of reading-reader, text and context-in their descriptions of factors affecting children's reading performance. Illustrative of these theories is Kenneth's Goodman's (1967; 1984) description of reading as a dynamic, complex process of constructing meaning through an interaction between the reader and text in a particular context.

Child factors identified by teachers in the study included language, memory, familiarity and interest in the topic, genre and task, home and school experiences, self-confidence and attention span. Interactive theorists have noted the need to include children's linguistic knowledge (K. Goodman, 1964), prior knowledge and experiences (K. Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1984), and readers' expectations or schemata of the world (K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1977) in models of reading. From a transactive perspective, Rosenblatt (1978) identified readers' past experiences of literature and life as well as their values and cultural assumptions as affecting how they select and organize responses to what they have read.

Text factors identified by the teachers in the study included the nature of the plot, amount of episodes and contextual cues, familiarity of text words and sentence structures, predictability of story structure and the nature of illustrations. Again, several of these text characteristics have been identified as controlling the reading process (K. Goodman, 1983; 1984). K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1977) identified the grammatical nature of sentences and text length as determining utilization of cueing systems. Y. Goodman (1992c) noted that familiar text language and easy-to-follow story lines affect reading performance.

Teachers in this study also identified several aspects of the context as affecting children's performance on informal assessment tasks. These included the nature of teaching approaches, the nature of instruction and the amount of time given to complete assessment tasks. The crucial role of context in reading has been the focus of theorists such as Cazden (1992). According to Cazden, information exists and has meaning only in context. She uses the term context to refer to both the reader's internal contexts of author, text and world knowledge, and the external social contexts of interactions with teachers and peers. Overall, teachers in this study appeared to hold interactive theories of reading and to provide support for these theories through their comments about primary children's reading.

Implications for Further Research

1. Additional research involving a more representative group of teachers is recommended. This would confirm whether the informal assessment techniques and descriptions of primary children's reading provided by the 10 teachers in this study are representative of other teachers and not only language arts teachers identified as exemplary. The number of teacher-based assessment techniques could also be increased in order to determine if similar descriptions of primary children's reading result.

2. Further research could encourage more collaboration between teachers and researcher. For example, if teachers had been provided with access to my comments, they could have assisted in interpretations and explanations of differences between their comments and my analysis and in comprehensively describing children. K. Goodman (1989) describes collaborative research as an essential characteristic of future research in whole language.

3. While my study was collaborative, some of the assessment strategies were unfamiliar to teachers. The nature of teachers' assessment comments emerging from everyday classroom activities could be examined. In addition, further research could explore the relationship between assessment and teaching.

4. Perhaps a different methodology would indicate more developmental trends. The majority of group meeting time in this study was spent discussing individual students' reading samples with only limited time available for discussion of commonalities and differences in children's performance on similar assessment techniques within and across grades. Further research could allow additional time for discussion of developmental

trends and comparison of children at different reading levels rather than grade levels. Informal assessment could also be used to examine individual profiles rather than making grade level comparisons. Each child could be considered on an individual basis and different assessment tasks used with different children to help better understand the complex and idiosyncratic nature of each child's literacy development (Tierney, 1998). The congruence between teachers' descriptions of primary children's reading and the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation's (Department of Education, 1997) specific reading outcomes at emergent, early and transitional levels of reading could also be examined.

5. Additional research could clarify if differences in reading performance across grades were developmental or due to factors including teaching methodology, and/or teachers' higher criteria or expectations for older children. Reasons were unclear for teachers' more frequent concerns regarding Grade 2 and 3 children's lack of utilization of text information, their difficulty in using their own information and not going beyond text information and their lack of inferencing in retellings. It was difficult to determine the extent to which developmental factors, teaching methodology(s) or teachers' expectations contributed to comments that Kindergarten and Grade 1 children, for example, described their favourite parts as text illustrations, that Grade 2 children responded to text language and author, and that Grade 3 children engaged in more summarizing and comprehending.

6. Further research could allow more indepth examination of the impact of child and text factors on specific cueing systems, retellings and responses. This study did not examine the effect of reading ability on silent and oral reading, retellings and responses.

Additional research could examine the effect of reading ability on running records, retellings and literature responses with a separate analysis of high and low readers' performance on teacher-based assessment. In addition, guidelines that consider the difficulty of concepts, structure and vocabulary could be developed for more appropriate selection of texts. Further research would help clarify whether Kindergarten and Grade 1 children's difficulties in sequencing retellings were due to the nature of text or whether this is in keeping with Pelligrini's and Galda's (1982) findings that sequencing is difficult before the age of 7 years.

7. Additional research could explore differences found in this study between oral and written retellings as well as possible reasons for such differences. Further research could offer reasons for primary children more frequently including text middles in written than oral retellings, for teachers more frequent concerns regarding the text focus nature of written than oral retellings and for teachers' more frequently noting facility with written recall of text information as compared with oral recall of text information.

8. Further research could also help clarify inconsistencies between findings of this study and earlier research. Although teachers infrequently described Grade 2 children as summarizing text content, for example, Barone (1990) and Kelly (1990) found that Grade 2 children engaged in summarizing. We found that the nature of Grade 1 and 2 children's personal responses included recall of specific characters and their actions as favourite parts. However, Barone (1990) and Bunbury (1985) described Grade 1 and 2 children as empathizing with the characters, judging their conduct and comparing themselves with the characters. In addition, further research could help clarify inconsistencies between

teachers' comments and my analysis including the frequency of primary children's utilization of the cuing systems, of Grade 1 children's recall of information from text beginnings and Grade 3 children's beyond-text focus in written retellings.

9. Future analysis of retellings could be more comprehensive. My schema for analysis was similar to Goodman, Watson and Burke's Retelling Guide: Procedure I (1987) which primarily assessed recall of characters and events. Further research could rank events recalled in order of importance (Clark, 1982). Interpretation of retellings could also utilize Y. Goodman's Retelling Guide: Procedure 11 (1987) or Morrow's retelling guide (1988; 1989b) which focus on assessment of plot episodes, theme statements, inferences, sequence and misconceptions rather than events. In addition, interpretation could utilize more holistic analysis of retellings and literature responses, analyzing each reading sample as a whole rather than according to clausal units and response statements. Holistic analysis of retellings such as Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) grid to rank retellings from recall of details incoherently arranged to coherent and complete recall of text through summarizing and generalizing beyond the text could be considered. Literature responses could be analysed utilizing a scheme similar to Altieri's (1995) holistic assessment of responses which ranks levels of aesthetic involvement from little or no presence of story experience to the presence of personal involvement in the story experience.

10. Research that involves professional inquiry is needed in order to help classroom teachers rethink or reinvent their theories and practices regarding whole language.

Further research could explore reasons why teaching practices did not always match teachers' beliefs.

Concluding Statement

My research contributes to and updates the literature on miscue analysis and retellings. Much of the research in language arts in recent years has examined other aspects of literacy including writing development, literature response and early intervention programs, although relatively little research has analyzed primary children's literature responses. I have also become more cognizant of the impact of teaching approaches and teachers' beliefs as well as child and text factors on children's reading performance. Comparisons in children's reading performance across grades and studies must be drawn with caution since the impact of these factors is not always known.

In addition, this study provides critical information to assist teachers in instructional planning as well as school districts and the Department of Education in future professional development initiatives. Teachers need time and assistance to adapt their practices and beliefs to incorporate new beliefs and practices (Hall & Hord, 1987; Fullan & Park, 1981; Fullan, 1991). While the Department of Education plays a major role through suggesting possible procedures and providing external support, flexibility is needed at department, district and school levels. As a consultant, rather than concentrating my efforts largely on developing more top-down provincial handbooks that outline "correct" assessment strategies to be imposed on teachers, my future initiatives will also involve opportunities for teachers to inquire, share and discuss assessment practices.

Finally, this study has helped me to further develop my theory of language learning. I have deeper understanding of the importance of children's prior experiences, of active involvement in learning, and of utilization of cueing systems and strategies. In addition, my theory of language learning has broadened to include critical and political components. I realize the need to consider the context of the school, district and community in which language innovations are occurring as well as the political, bureaucratic and organizational demands upon change.

REFERENCES

Adkins, T., & Niles, J. (1985, December). The influence of sustaining feedback on the oral reading performance of low ability readers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the 35th national reading conference. San Diego, CA. ERIC Document 267 377.

Afflerbach, P., & Kapinus, B. (1993). Reading assessment: The balancing act. Reading Teacher, 47, 1, 62-64.

Allington, R. L., & Strange, M. (1987). Prediction processes in good and poor readers. Arlington, Va: ERIC Document Reproduction Service. ERIC Document (154 173).

Althouse, S. M. (1991, May). A pilot project using portfolios to document progress in the school program. Paper presented at the 36th annual meeting of the International Reading Association, Las Vegas, NV.

Altieri, J. L. (1995). Pictorial/Oral and written responses of first grade students: Can aesthetic growth be measured? Reading Horizons, 35, 4, 273-86.

Ammon, P., Simons, H., & Elster, C. (1990, December). Effects of primerese language on the reading process. Technical Report No. 45. Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy, Berkeley, CA. ERIC Document 334 542.

Anderson, N. A. (1993). Developing and assessing emergent literacy through children's literature. 227-234. In M. Collins & B. Moss (Eds.), Literacy Assessment for today's schools (pp. 227-234). Harrisonburg Virginia: College Reading Association.

Anderson, G. S. (1985, May). Applying discourse analysis, miscue analysis and cohesive analysis to reader and text: Classroom implications related to comprehension. Paper presented at 30th annual meeting of the international reading association. New Orleans, L.A.

Anderson, R. C., Hiebert, E. H., Scott, J. A., & Wilkinson, I. A., (1985). Becoming a nation of Readers. Champaign, IL: Centre for the Study of Reading.

Anthony, R. J., Johnson, T. D., Mickelson, N. L., & Preece, A. (1991). Evaluating literacy: A perspective for change. Toronto: Irwin Publishing.

Applebee, A. N. (1978). The child's concept of story. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Appleyard, J. A. (1990). Becoming a reader: The experience of fiction from childhood to adulthood. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Atwell, N. (1987). In the middle: Writing, reading and learning with adolescents. New York: Boynton/Cook.

Au, K. H-P. (1977). Analyzing oral reading errors to improve instruction. The Reading Teacher, 31, 1, 46-49.

Bailey, J., Brazee, P., Chiavaroli, S., Herbeck, J., Lechner, T., Lewis, D., McKittrick, A., Redwine, L., Reid, K., Robinson, B., & Spear, H. (1988). Problem solving our way to alternative evaluation procedures. Language Arts, 65, 4, 364-733.

Barnes, B. L. (1996/1997). But teacher you went right on: A perspective on Reading Recovery. The Reading Teacher, 50, 4, 284-291.

Barone, D. (1990). The written responses of young children: Beyond comprehension to story understanding. The New Advocate, 3, 1, 49-56.

Bartelo, D. M. (1984). Getting the picture of reading and writing: A look at the drawings, composing, and oral language of limited English proficiency children. ERIC Document ED 245 533.

Beach, R. W. (1973). The literary response processes of college students while reading and discussing three poems. Ph.D. Dissertation, Urbana: University of Illinois, ERIC Document 083 627.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & McCaslin, E. S. (1981). Does reading make sense? Problems of early readers. The Reading Teacher, 34, 7, 780-785.

Beebe, M. J. (1980). The effect of different types of substitution miscues on reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 15, 3, 324-335.

Beebe, M. J. (1981). A model of the relationships between reading strategies and reading comprehension. Dissertation. Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta.

Bembridge, T. (1992). A MAP for reading assessment. Educational Leadership, 49, 8, 46-8.

Biemiller, A. (1970). The development and use of graphic and contextual information as children learn to read. Reading Research Quarterly, 6, 1, 75-96.

Biemiller, A. (1979). Changes in the use of graphic and contextual information as functions of passage difficulty and reading achievement level. Journal of Reading behavior, 11, 4, 307-318.

Bintz, W., & Harste, J. (1990). Whole language and the future of literacy assessment: Some insights and concerns. Paper presented at the National Symposium on Alternative Assessment in Language Arts, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

Bird, L. (1989). The art of teaching: Evaluation and revision. In K. Goodman., Y. Goodman., & W. Hood (Eds.), The Whole language evaluation book (pp. 15-24). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bird, L. B. (1992). Getting started with portfolios. In Goodman, K.S; Bird, L.B; & Goodman, Y.M. (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 128). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Bladen, J. (1994). Teacher empowerment: Evaluation in the hands of teachers. In B. Cambourne, & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp.147-152). N.H: Heinemann Portsmouth.

Blatt, G.T., & Rosen, L.M. (1984). The writing response to literature. Journal of Reading, 28, 1, 8-12.

Blaxall, J., & Willow, D. E. (1984). Reading ability and text difficulty as influences on second graders' oral reading errors. Journal of Educational Psychology, 76, 2, 330-341.

Blunt, J. (1977). Response to reading: How some young readers describe the process. English in Education, 11, 3, 38-47.

Boettcher, H. (1977). Reading strategies of first grade pupils on two programmes: An examination and comparison of reading miscues. ERIC Document 81-2052.

Botel, M., & Lytle, S. (1988). PCRPII reading writing and talking across the curriculum. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvannia Department of Education ERIC Document.

Bottone, M. (1995). The effect of small group instruction on reading comprehension. M.A. Project, Kean College of New Jersey, ERIC Document 379 641.

Bower, G. H. (1976). Experiments on story understanding and recall. Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology, 28, 4, 511-534.

Brake, D. M. (1981). An investigation of oral and silent reading with low and high achievers. Thesis. Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta.

Brandt, R. (1989). On misuse of testing: A conversation with George Madaus. Educational Leadership, 47, 7, 26-29.

Brewer, R. (1989, June). State assessments of student performance. Presentation at the 19th Annual Assessment Conference sponsored by Education Commission of the States, Colorado Department of Education, Boulder, CO.

Bridge, C., Winograd, P., & Haley, D. (1983). Using predictable materials vs. preprimers to teach beginning sight words. The Reading Teacher, 36, 9, 884-891.

Brown, A. L. (1975). The construction of temporal succession in preoperational children. In A. D. Pick (Ed.) Minnesota symposia on child psychology, (Vol. 10), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Browne, A., Fitts, M., McLaughlin, B., McNamara, M., & Williams, J. (1996/1997). Teaching and learning in Reading Recovery: Response to "But teacher you went right on." The Reading Teacher, 50, 4, 294-300.

Brown H., & Cambourne, B. (1987). Read and retell. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bulcock, J. (1991). Whole language implementation in grade two 1989-1990: A report to participants. Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Bullock, A. (1975). A language for life. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Bunbury, R. (1985). Levels of response to literature. Australian Journal of Reading, 8, 4, 220-229.

Burke, C. L., & Goodman, K. S. (1970). When a child reads: A psycholinguistic analysis. Elementary English, 47, 1, 121-129.

Burnham, C. C. (1986). Teaching literature through writing: An informal publication project. Journal of Teaching Writing, 5, 1, 91-102..

Calfee, R., & Hiebert, E. (1991). Classroom assessment of reading. In R. Barr., M. L. Kamil., P. Mosenthal & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), Handbook of research on reading 2, (pp. 281-309). New York: Longman.

Calkins, L.M. (1987). The art of teaching writing. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cambourne, B. (1994). Why is evaluation of learning such a 'hot' issue? In B. Cambourne, B., & J. Turbill (Eds), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 1-8). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cambourne B., & Turbill, J. (1987). Coping with chaos. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cambourne, B. & Turnbill, J. (1990). Assessment in whole language classrooms: Theory into practice. The Elementary School Journal, 90, 3, 337- 349.

Cambourne, B., & Turbill, J. (1994a). Responsive evaluation: making valid judgments about student literacy. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cambourne, B., & Turbill, J. (1994b). What we found out from the research project. In Cambourne, B. and Turbill, J. (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: making valid judgments about student literacy (pp.16-27). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cambourne, B., Turbill, J., & Dal Santo, D. (1994a). Yes, but how do we make assessment and evaluation 'scientific'? In B. Cambourne, B., & Turbill, J. (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cambourne, B., Turbill, J., & Dal Santo, D. (1994b). Interpreting data: How do do we make sense of what we collect? In B. Cambourne, & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 104-112). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cameron, I., & Mickelson, N. (1989). Whole language basal readers. Reading-Canada-Lecture, 7, 3, 267-271.

Canning, P.M. (1996). Special matters: The report of the review of special education. Queen's Printer. St. John's Newfoundland.

Carbo, M. (1988). Debunking the great phonics myth. Phi Delta Kappan, 70, 3, 226-40.

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986). Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research. Basingstoke: Falmer Press.

Cazden, C. B. (1988). Classroom discourse. The language of teaching and learning. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Cazden, C. B. (1992). Whole language plus - Essays on literacy in the United States and New Zealand. New York: Teachers College Press.

Chall, J. S. (1983a). Learning to read: The great debate. New York, N.Y: McGraw-Hill.

Chall, J. S. (1983b). Stages of reading development. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Chall, J. S. (1989). Learning to read: The great debate: 20 years later - A response to 'Debunking the great phonics myth.' Phi Delta Kappan, 70, 7, 522-538.

Chesnov, W. B. (1994). The relevance of illustration in basal readers as it relates to contextual meaning. Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master of Arts Degree, Kean College of New Jersey.

Chinn, C. A., Waggoner, M. A., Anderson, R. C., Schommer, M., & Wilkinson, I.A.G. (1993). Situated actions during reading lessons: A microanalysis of oral reading error episodes. American Educational Research Journal, 30, 2, 361-392.

Christenson, A. (1968). Oral reading errors of intermediate grade children at their independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels. In J. Figueral (Ed.), Reading and realism. Proceedings of the 13th Annual Conference of the International Reading Association.

Christie, J. F., & Alonso, P. A . (1980). Effects of passage difficulty on primary-grade children's oral reading error patterns. Educational Research Quarterly, 5, 1, 40-49.

Church, S. M. (1996). The future of whole language: Reconstruction or self-destruction. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Church, S., Portelli, J., MacInnis, C., Vibert, A., & Kelly, U. (1995). Reconsidering whole language: Five perspectives. English Quarterly, 27, 1-2, 5-14.

Cianciolo, P. J. (1988). Critical thinking in the study of children's literature in the elementary grades. Michigan: Michigan State University, The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. ERIC Document 303 804.

Cianciolo, P. J. (1989). No small challenge: Literature for the transitional readers. Language Arts, 66, 1, 72-81.

Clark, C. H. (1982). Assessing free recall. The Reading Teacher, 35, 4, pp. 434-439.

Clay, M. M. (1968). A syntactic analysis of reading errors. Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 7, 434-438.

Clay, M. M. (1969). Reading errors and self-correction behavior. British Journal of Educational Psychology, 39, Part 1, 47-56.

Clay, M. M. (1989). Sand. Auckland: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (1989). Stones. Auckland: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (1985). The early detection of reading difficulties (3rd ed). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (1991). Becoming literate the construction of inner control. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Educational Books Inc.

Cohen, A. S. (1974/ 1975). Oral reading errors of first grade children taught by a code emphasis approach. Reading Research Quarterly, 10, 4, 616-650.

Collins, M. D., & Moss, B. G. (Eds.). (1996). Literacy assessment for today's schools. Monograph of The College Reading Association, Harrisonburg, VA: The College Reading Association.

Cox, C., & Many, J. E. (1992). Toward an understanding of the aesthetic response to literature. Language arts, 69, 1, 28-33.

Crowell, C. G. (1992). A whole language checklist. In K. S. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (pp.112-113). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Cullinan, B. E., Harwood, K. T., & Galda, L. (1983). The reader and the story: Comprehension and response. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 16, 3, 29-38.

D'Angelo, K. (1981). Correction behavior of good and poor readers. Reading World, 21, 2, 123-9.

DeLawter, J., & Hendsch, C. (1992). Portfolios. In K. S. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 51), Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Denner, P. R., McGinley, W. J., Brown, E. (1988). Effects of providing story impressions as a pre-reading/writing activity on the story comprehension and oral reading miscues of second-grade readers. Final Report. Idaho State University, Pocatello. ERIC Document 301 855.

Department of Education. (1990). Evaluation of students in the classroom: A handbook and policy guide. St. John's, NF: Division of Evaluation and Research.

Department of Education. (1990). Reading and writing difficulties: An educator's handbook. St. John's, NF: Division of Student Support Services.

Department of Education. (1991). Experiencing language: A primary language curriculum guide. St. John's, NF: Division of Program Development.

Department of Education. (1992). Special education policy manual. St. John's, NF: Division of Student Support Services.

Department of Education. (1992). Reflections on language teaching and learning: The elementary teachers' perspective. St. John's, NF: Division of Program Development.

Department of Education. (1997). Atlantic Canada english language arts entry-3 curriculum. St. John's, NF: Division of Program Development.

Deshler, D. & Ewert, M. (1995). Participatory action research: Tradition and major assumptions. http://tdg.uoguelph.ca/~pi/pdrc/articles/article.1

Dixon, C. N. (1978, November 30 - December 2). Story type and children's recall. Paper presented at the 28th Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference. St. Petersbury Beach, Florida.

Dixon-Krauss, L. (1996). Vygotsky in the classroom: Mediated literacy instruction and assessment. New York: Longman Publishers.

Dreher, M. J., & Singer, H. (1980). Story grammar instruction unnecessary for intermediate grade students. The Reading Teacher, 34, 3, 261-268.

Drum, P. A. & Lantaff, R. E. (1977). Scoring categories for protocols. Paper presented at Boston University Conference on Reading.

Dunning, D. (1992). Instructional questions that clarify story characters' feelings and motivations: Their effect on students' narrative comprehension. Urbana: Center for the Study of Reading. ERIC 350 579.

Durkin, D. (1978/1979). What classroom observations reveal about reading comprehension instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, 14, 4, 481-533.

Eeds, M. & Wells, D. (1989). Grand conversations: An exploration of meaning construction in literature study groups. Research in the Teaching of English, 23, 1, 4-29.

Elliott, G. R. (1992). Educational change: Principles and guidelines for program implementation in school districts. Master's thesis. Memorial University of Newfoundland, Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Englander, M., Harste, J. (1979, April). Cue system utilization among beginning

readers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California. ERIC Document 176 228.

Erickson, F. (1987). Qualitative methods in research in teaching. In V. K. Richardson (Ed.) Handbook on research in teaching. (pp. 119-160). American Education Research Association.

Fagan, W. T. (1989). The learning and teaching of reading. Edmonton: Eolas Educational Publishing.

Farr, R. (1994). Current issues in alternative assessment. In Smith, C. (Ed.), Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts (pp. 3-17). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University,

Farr, R., & Beck, M. (1991). Evaluating language and development: Formal methods of evaluation. In J. Flood., J. M. Jensen., D. Lapp., & J. R. Squire. Handbook of research on Teaching the English Language Arts (pp. 489-499). Toronto: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Farr, R., Lewis, M., Faszholz, J., Pinsky, E., Towle, S., Lipschutz, J., & Pruitt, F. (1990). Writing in response to reading. Educational Leadership, 47, 6, 66-9.

Farr, R., & Lowe, K. (1994). Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts: what are we doing now? Where are we going? In C. Smith (Ed.), Alternative assessment in language arts (pp. 69-82). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Feathers, K. M., & White, J. H. (1987). Reader reactions to text. Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Research Association, Washington, D.C.

Five, C. L. (1986). Fifth graders respond to a changed reading program. Harvard Educational Review, 56, 4, 395-405.

Five, C. L. (1988). From workshop to workshop: Increasing children's involvement in the reading process. New Advocate, 1, 2, 103-113.

Flapan, D. (1968). Children's understanding of social interaction. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, ERIC 031 298.

Flitterman-King, S. (1988). The role of the response journal in active reading. Quarterly of National Writing Project and Center for the Study of Writing, 10, 3, 4-11.

Freeman, Y., & Freeman, D. (1992). In K. S. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman. (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 176). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Froese, V. (Ed.) (1996). Whole language: Practice and theory (2nd ed.). Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.

Fullan, M. (1991). The new meaning of educational change (2nd ed.). Toronto: OISE Press.

Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1991). What's worth fighting for in your school. Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation.

Fullan, M., & Park, P. (1981). Curriculum implementation: A resource booklet. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education.

Furniss, E. (1979). Schemas for reading texts differing in organization: A study of sixth grade proficient readers. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the New Zealand Conference on Reading, Perth, West Australia, August 25-28, ERIC Document 178 874.

Gabel, D. (1995). An introduction to action research. Presidential address, National Association for Research in Science Technology. San Francisco. http://www.phy.nau.edu/~danmac/actionrsch.html

Galda, L. (1980). Three children reading stories: Response to literature in preadolescents. Dissertation International Abstracts, 41, 6, 2438A.

Galda, L. (1982). Assuming the spectator stance: An examination of the responses of three young readers. Research in the Teaching of English, 16, 1, 1-20.

Gambrell, L. B., & Jawitz, P. B. (1993). Mental imagery, text illustrations and children's story comprehension and recall. Reading Research Quarterly, 28, 3, 265-273.

Gambrell, L. B., Pfeiffer, W. & Wilson, R. (1985). The effects of retelling upon reading comprehension and recall of text information. Journal of Educational Research, 78, 4, 216-20.

Glazer, S. M., & Brown, C. S. (1993). Portfolios and beyond: Collaborative assessment in reading and writing. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.

Glazer, S. M., Searfoss, L. M., & Gentile, L. M. (Eds.). (1988). Re-examining reading diagnosis: New trends and procedures. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Golden, J. M. (1984). Children's concept of story in reading and writing. Reading Teacher, 37, 7, 578-84.

Goldsmith-Phillips, J. (1989). Word and context in reading development: A test of the interactive-compensatory hypothesis. Journal of Educational Psychology, 81, 3, 299-305.

Gonzales, P. C., & Elijah, D. V. (1975). Rereading: Effect on error patterns and performance levels on the IRI. Reading Teacher, 28, 7, 647-52.

Goodlad, J. I. (1970). Behind the classroom door. Ohio: Charles A. Jones Publishing Co.

Goodman, K. S. (1964). A linguistic study of the cues and miscues in reading. A paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, Chicago. February 19-21.

Goodman, K. S. (1967). Reading: A Psycholinguistic guessing game. Journal of the Reading Specialist, May.

Goodman, K. S. (1973). Miscues: Windows on the reading process. In K. S. Goodman (Ed.), Miscue analysis: Applications to reading instruction. (pp. 3-14). Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearing house on Reading and Communication Skills and the National Council of Teachers of English, ERIC Document 080 973.

Goodman, K. S. (1975). Influences of the visual peripheral field in reading. Research in the Teaching of English, 9, 2, 210-222.

Goodman, K. S. (1983). Text features as they relate to miscues: Determiners. A research report. Program in Language and Literacy Occasional Paper No. 8. Arizona University, Tucson, Arizona. Center for Educational Research and Development, July. ERIC Document 297 260.

Goodman, K. S. (1994). Transactional psycholinguistic model. In H. Singer & R. Ruddell (Eds.), Theoretical models and processes of reading (3rd ed.). Delaware: International Reading Association.

Goodman, K. S. (1986a). Basal readers: A call for action. Language Arts, 63, 4, 358-363.

Goodman, K. S. (1989). Whole language research: Foundations and development The Elementary School Journal, 90, 2, 207-220.

Goodman, K. S. (1992a). The new tests: Will they be successful? In Goodman, et al. (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment, (p. 110). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, K. S., Bird, L. B., & Goodman, Y. M. (1991). The whole language catalog. Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, K. S., Bird, L. B., & Goodman, Y. M. (1992). The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment. Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. (1968). Study of children's behavior while reading orally. Contract No. OE-6-10-136, Washington, D.C: US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education.

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. (1969). A study of the oral reading miscues that result in grammatical re-transformations. Detroit: Wayne State University, ERIC Document 039 101.

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. L. (1970). When a child reads: A psycholinguistic analysis. Elementary English, 47, 1, 121-29.

Goodman, K. S., & Goodman, Y. M. (1977). Learning about psycholinguistic processes by analyzing oral reading. Harvard Educational Review, 47, 3, 317-333.

Goodman, K. S., Goodman, Y. M., & Hood, W. J. (Eds.). (1989). The whole language evaluation book. Toronto: Irwin Publishing.

Goodman, K., Shannon, P., Freeman, Y., & Murphy, S. (1988). Report card on basal readers. Katonah, N.Y: Richard C. Owen.

Goodman, Y. M. (1985). Kidwatching: Observing children in the classroom. In A. Jaggar, M. T. Smith-Burke (Eds.), Observing the language learner (pp.9-18). Newark: International Reading Association; Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Goodman, Y. M., Watson D. J., & Burke, C. L. (1987). Reading miscue inventory: Alternative procedures. New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers Inc.

Goodman, Y. M. (1989). Roots of the whole-language movement. The Elementary School Journal, 90, 2, 113-126.

Goodman, Y. M. (1991). Informal methods of evaluation. In J. Flood., J. M. Jensen., D. Lapp., & J. R. Squire (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Teaching the English Language Arts. (pp. 502-509). Toronto: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992a). Tools for evaluation. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 98), Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992b). Through the miscue window. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 59). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992c). Miscues influenced by the written text. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment. (p. 72). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992d). A teacher's professional sense. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 43). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992e). Miscue analysis: Forms and procedures. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (p. 148). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M. (1992f). Understanding miscue analysis. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds). The whole language catalog: Supplement on authentic assessment (pp. 20-21). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Goodman, Y. M., & Goodman, K. S. (1994). To err is human: Learning about language processes by analyzing miscues. In Ruddell, R., Ruddell, M., & Singer H. (Eds.). Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th ed.) (pp. 104-123). Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.

Gordon, C. J. (1991). English language arts instruction and assessment in Canada. Reflections on Canadian Literacy, 9, 3&4, 153-158.

Graham, J. (1994). Organizing the classroom for responsive evaluation: Getting started K-3. In B. Cambourne, B., & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 38-59). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Graves, D. (1983). Writing: Teachers and children at work. Portsmouth, N. H: Heinemann Educational Books Inc.

Greene, B. H. L. (1974). A psycholinguistic analysis of the multiple attempts produced in oral reading by selected readers upon the single appearance of an item within a text and upon items recurring throughout a text. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Wayne State University.

Green, M. (1994). Children as evaluators: Understanding evaluation from the inside. In B. Cambourne., & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 83-103) Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Guba, Y. S., & Lincoln, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. London: Sage Publications.

Haertel, E. (1992). Performance measurement. In M. C. Alkin (Ed.), Encyclopaedia of Educational Research 6th ed (pp. 984- 989). New York: Macmillan.

Hall, C. (1987). Children's understanding of factors influencing recall performance. Paper presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development. ERIC Document 290552.

Hall, G. E., & Hord, S. M. (1987). Change in schools. New York: State University of New York.

Hancock, M. R. (1992). Literature response journals: Insights beyond the printed page. Language Arts, 69, 1, 36-42.

Hancock, M. R. (1993a). Exploring the meaning-making process through the content of literature response journals: A case study investigation. Research in the Teaching of English, 27, 4, 335-368.

Hancock, M. R. (1993b). Exploring and extending personal response through literature journals. The Reading Teacher, 46, 6, 466-474.

Harp, B. (1988). When your principal asks "When you do whole language instruction how will you keep track of reading and writing skills?" The Reading Teacher, 42, 2, 160-161.

Harp, B. (1991). Assessment and evaluation in whole language programs. Norwood MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishing.

Harste, J. C. & Burke, C. (1979). Re-examining retellings as comprehension devices. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, San Antonio, TX, December.

Harste, J. C., Short, Burke, C. (1988). Creating classrooms for authors. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Educational Books.

Harste, J. C. (1988). Creating classrooms for authors (Video). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Educational Books.

Harste, J. C. (1994). Whole language and evaluation: Some grounded needs, wants and desires. In Smith, C. (Ed.), Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts (pp.18-35). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Heath, S. B. (1983). Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Heller, M. (1995). Assessing the language arts. In Reading-Writing connections form theory to practice 2nd ed (pp. 271-312). N.Y: Longman Publishers.

Hickman, J. (1981). A new perspective on response to literature: Research in an elementary school setting. Research in the Teaching of English, 15, 4, 343-54.

Hickman, J. (1983). Everything considered: Response to literature in an elementary school setting. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 16, 3, 8-13.

Hiebert, E. H. (1991). Teacher-based assessment of literacy learning. In J. Flood., J. M. Jensen., D. Lapp., & J. R. Squire (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Teaching the English Language Arts (pp. 510-520). Toronto: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Hiebert, E. H., Valencia, S. W., & Afflerbach, P. P. (1994). Definitions and perspectives. In S. W. Valencia., E. H. Hiebert., & P. P. Afflerbach (Eds.), Authentic reading assessment: Practices and possibilities (pp. 6-21). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Holdaway, D. (1979). Foundations of Literacy. Sydney, Australia: Ashton, Scholastic.

Hood, W. (1989). If the teacher comes over, pretend it's a telescope! In K. S. Goodman, Y. M. Goodman & W. I. Hood (Eds.), The whole language evaluation book. Toronto: Irwin Publishing.

Hopkins, D. (1985). A teacher's guide to classroom research. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Hutson, B. A., & Niles, J. A. (1973). Parallel analysis of oral language and reading miscues. Paper presented at the national reading conference, Houston, Texas.

Hynds, C. (1989). Bringing life to literature and literature to life: Social constructs and contexts of four adolescent readers. Research in the Teaching of English, 23, 1, 30-61.

International Reading Association/National Council of Teachers of English Joint Task Force on Assessment (1994). Standards for the assessment of reading and writing. Newark: International Reading Association.

Irwin, P. A., & Mitchell, J. N. (1983). A procedure for assessing the richness of retellings. Journal of Reading, 25, 5, 391-396.

Irwin-De Vitis, L. (1996). Literacy portfolios: The myth and the reality. In Collins, M. D., & Moss, B. G. (Eds.), Literacy assessment for today's schools pp. 135-145. Monograph of The College Reading Association, Virginia .

Isakson, M. B., & Boody, R. M. (1993). Hard questions about teacher research. In L. Patterson., C. M. Sanata., K. G. Short., & K. Smith (Eds.), Teachers are researchers: Reflection and action (pp. 26-34). Delaware: International Reading Association.

Iser, W. (1978). The act of reading: A theory of aesthetic response. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jett-Simpson, M. (1976). Children's inferential responses to a wordless picture book: Development and use of a classification system for verbalized inference. Research prepared at the University of Wisconsisn, Milwaukee. ERIC Document 139 005.

Johns, J. L. (1994). Literacy portfolios: A primer. In Smith, C. Ed.), Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts (pp. 249-255). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Johns, J., & Van Liersburg, P. (1990). In Smith, C. (Ed.), In Alternative assessment of performance in language arts. ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Johns, J. L. & Van Leirsburg, P. (1992). How professionals view portfolio assessment. Reading Research and Instruction, 32, 1, 1-10.

Johns, J. L., & Van Leirsburg, P. (1994). Portfolio assessment: A survey among professionals. In Smith, C. (Ed.), Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts (pp. 242-248). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Johnson, R. (1970). Recall of prose as a function of structural importance of the linguistic unit. Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 9, 1, 12-20.

Johnston, P. (1987). Assessing the process, and the process of assessment, in the language arts. In J. Squire (Ed.), The dynamics of language learning (pp. 335-357). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Jongsma, K. S. (1989). Portfolio assessment (Questions and answers). Reading Teacher, 43, 3, 264-265.

Juel, C. (1980). Comparison of word identification strategies with varying context, word type and reader skills. Reading Research Quarterly 15, 13, 358-76.

Juel, C. (1991). Beginning reading. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil., P. B.Mosenthal., & P. D. Pearson, (Eds.), Handbook of Reading Research 2, 759-788. New York: Longman.

Kalmback, J. R. (1986). Getting at the point of retellings. Journal of Reading, 29, 4, 326-33.

Kapinus, B. (1992). Looking at the ideal and the real in large scale reading assessment: The view from tow sides of the river. Reading Teacher, 47, 7, 578-580.

Kelly, P. R. (1990). Guiding young students' responses to literature. The Reading Teacher, 43, 6, 464-470.

Kelly, P. R,. Klein, A., & Neal, J. (1993, December). High-risk emergent readers' use of cueing systems. Paper presented at the 43rd annual meeting of the national reading conference. Charleston, South Carolina. ERIC Document 370 096.

Kemmis, S. (1993). Action research and social movement: A challenge for policy research. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 1, 1. (http://olam.ed.asu.edu/epaa/v1n1.html).

Kibby, M. W. (1979). Passage readability affects the oral reading strategies of disabled readers. Reading Teacher, 32, 4, 390-396.

Kiefer, B. (1983). The responses of children in a combination first/second grade classroom to picture books in a variety of artistic styles. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 16, 3, 14-20.

Kolers, P. A. (1970). Three stages in reading. In H. Levin & J. P. Williams (Eds.), Basic studies on reading. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Koskinen, P., Gambrell, L., Kapinus, B., & Heathington, B. (1988). A strategy for enhancing students' reading comprehension. Reading Teacher, 41, 9, 892-96.

Kragler, S. (1991). Mediated reading levels of chapter 1 third grade students. Reading Improvement, 28, 2, 125-128.

Kragler, S. (1996). Vygotsky and at-risk readers: Assessment and instructional implications. In L. Dixon-Krauss. (Ed.), Vygotsky in the classroom: Mediated literacy instruction and assessment (pp. 149-160). New York: Longman Publishers.

Krest, M. (1990). Adapting the portfolio to meet student needs. English Journal, 79, 2, 29-34.

Langer, J. A. (1989). The process of understanding literature. Report Series 2.1. Centre for the Learning and Teaching of Literature, Albany, N. Y. Office of Educational Research and Development. ERIC Document 315 755.

Leithwood, K. A., and Montgomery, D. J. (1987). Improving classroom practices using innovation profiles. Toronto: OISE Press.

Leslie, L. (1980). The use of graphic and contextual information by average and below-average readers. Journal of reading behavior, 12, 2, 139-149.

Leu, D. J., DeGroff, L., & Simmons, H. (1986). Predictable texts and interactive-compensatory hypotheses: Evaluating individual differences in reading ability, context use and comprehension. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78, 5, 347-352.

Levine, E. F. (1976). The relationship between three patterns of oral reading errors and specific reading strategies. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Northwestern University. ERIC Document 141 743.

Linn, R. L., Baker, E. L., & Dunbar, S. B. (1991). Complex performance-based assessment: Expectations and validation criteria. Educational Researcher, 20, 8, 15-21.

Lipson, M. Y., & Wixson, K. K. (1991). Assessment and instruction of reading disability: An interactive approach. Harper Collins Publishers, N.Y.

Malicky, G. V. (1991). Myths and assumptions of literacy education. The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 37, 4, 331-347.

Mandler, J. M. & DeForest, M. (1977). A code in the node: Developmental differences in the use of a story schema. Paper presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, New Orleans. ERIC Document 142 988.

Mandler, J. M., & Johnson, N. S. (1977). Remembrance of things parsed: Story structure and recall. Cognitive Psychology, 9, 1, 111-115.

Marzano, R.J., Haggerty, P.J., Valencia, S.W., & DiStefano, P.P. (1987). Reading diagnosis and instruction: Theory into practice. Englewood Clifs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Mathie, V. (1994). Making beliefs explicit: One teacher's journey. In B. Cambourne & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 28-37). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

McConaughy, S. H. (1982). Developmental changes in story comprehension and levels of questioning. Language Arts, 59, 6, 580-589.

McKay, R. (1993). Whole language: Defining our beliefs, examining our practices. In L. Stewin., & S. McCann (Eds.), Contemporary educational issues: The Canadian Mosaic 2nd ed (pp. 482-504). Copp Clark Pittman Ltd.

Meyer, R. J. (1992). Miscues or mistakes: Two teachers and two students. In K. Goodman., L. B. Bird., & Y. M. Goodman (Eds.), The Whole Language Catalog: Supplement on Authentic Assessment (p. 60). Santa Rosa, CA: American School Publishers.

Monson, D. L. (1986). Patterns of response to literature. In Z. Sutherland & M. H. Arbuthnot (Eds.), Children and books 7th ed (pp. 550-564). Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co.

Montague, M., Maddux, C. D., & Dereshiwsky, M. I.. (1990). Story grammar and comprehension and production of narrative prose by students with learning disabilities. Journal of Learning Disabilities. 23. 3. 190-197.

Moorman, G. B., Blanton, W. E., & McLaughlin, T. (1994). The rhetoric of whole language. Reading Research Quarterly. 29. 4. 309-329.

Morrow, L. M. (1982). Relationships between literature programs, library corner designs, and children's use of literature. Journal of Educational Research. 75. 6. 339-344.

Morrow, L. M. (1984). Effects of story retelling on young children's comprehension and sense of structure. In J. Niles & L. Harris (Eds.), Changing perspectives in research in reading/language processing and instruction (pp. 95-10). Rochester, NY: National Reading Conference.

Morrow, L. M. (1985). Retelling stories: A strategy for improving children's comprehension, concept of story structure and oral language complexity. Elementary School Journal. 85. 5. 647-661.

Morrow, L. M. (1988). Retelling stories as a diagnostic tool. In S. Glazer., L. Searfoss., & L. Gentile (Eds.), Reexamining reading diagnosis: New trends and procedures. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Morrow, L. M. (1989a). Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Morrow, L. M. (1989b). Using story retelling to develop comprehension. In K. D. Muth (Ed.), Children's comprehension of text: Research and practice (pp. 37-58). International Reading Association, Delaware.

McInnes, J., Ryckman, J., Graves, C., & McClymont, C. (1988). Nelson Networks Language Program. Scarborough: Nelson Canada.

Newman, J. M. (1992). Questions and Answers About Whole Language. In O. Cocharan (Ed.), Katonah, New York: Richard C. Owen

Odel, L. & Cooper, C. R. (1976). Describing responses to works of fiction. Research in the Teaching of English. 10. 3. 203-25.

O'Sullivan, J. T. (1992). Reading beliefs and reading achievement: A developmental study of students from low income families. In S. Norris & L. Phillips (Eds.), Paths to Literacy and Illiteracy in Newfoundland. Technical Report for the Secretary of State of Canada.

Paradis, E. E., Chatton, B., Boswell, A., Smith, M., & Yowich, S. (1991). Accountability: Assessing comprehension during literature discussion. The Reading Teacher, 45, 1, 8-17.

Paris, S. G., & Ayres, L. R. (1994). Becoming reflective students and teachers with portfolios and authentic assessment. Washington: American Psychological Association.

Paris, S. G., & Byrnes, J. P. (1990). The constructivist approach to self-regulation and learning in the classroom. In B. J. Zimmerman & D. H. Schunk (Eds.), Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An overview. Educational Psychologist, 25, 1, 3-17.

Pelligrini, A., & Galda, L. (1982). The effects of thematic fantasy play training on the development of children's comprehension. American Educational Research Journal, 19, 3, 443-52.

Peng, C-Y., & Levin, J. R. (1978, March). Longer term effects of pictures on children's story recall. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association Toronto, Canada.

Peterson, R., & Eeds, M. (1990). Grand conversations. Toronto: Scholastic.

Piaget, J. (1960). The language and thought of the child. New York: New American Library.

Piaget, J. & Inhelder, B. (1973). Memory and intelligence. New York: Basic Books.

Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1969). The psychology of the child. New York: Basic Books.

Pikulski, J. J. (1990). The role of tests in a literacy assessment program. The Reading Teacher, 43, 9, 686-688.

Pils, L. J. (1992). Soon anofe you tout me: Evaluation in a first-grade language classroom. The Reading Teacher, 45, 1, 46-50.

Pinnell, G. S., & Matlin, M. L. (Eds). (1989). Teachers and research: Language learning in the classroom. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Prendergast, M. (1994). Seven stages in my first action research project. Hastings County Board of Education (http://educ.queensu.ca/projects/action_research/michael.htm).

Pronger, E. L., Johnson, T. D., & Yore, L. D. (1985). The effects of repeated presentations of a story on the recall and comprehension of grade one students. Paper presented at the International Reading Association Transmountain Conference, Portland Oregon, March.

Protherough, R. (1983). How children judge stories. Children's Literature in Education, 14, 1, 3-13.

Pryor, E. (1996). Assessment criteria in first grade: What teachers want to know about students' reading and writing. In M.D. Collins., & B. G. Moss, (Eds.), Literacy assessment for today's schools, Virginia: The College Reading Association.

Purves, A. C. (1975). Research in the teaching of literature. Elementary English, 52 ,4, 463-6.

Purves, A. C., & Beach, R. (1992). Literature and the reader: Research in response to literature, reading interests, and the teaching of literature. National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana Ill.

Purves, A. C., & Rippere, V. (1968). Elements of writing about a literary work: A study of response to literature. NCTE Research Report No 9, NCTE, xiii.

Rasinski, T. V. (1995). Reply to Pinnell, DeFord, Lyons, and Bryk. Reading Research Quarterly, 30, 2, 276-277.

Rhodes, L. K. (1979). Comprehension and predicability: An analysis of beginning reading materials. In J. C. Harste & R. F. Carey (Eds.), Monograph in Language and Reading Studies New Perspectives on Comprehension (pp. 100-131) N.3, October 1979.

Rhodes, L. K., & Nathenson-Mejia, S. (1992). Anecdotal records: A powerful tool for ongoing literacy assessment. The Reading Teacher, 45, 7, 501-9.

Rhodes, L. K. & Shanklin, N. L. (1993). Windows into literacy: Assessing learners K-8. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Publishing.

Richgels, D. J., McGee, L. M., & Slaton, E. A. (1985). Text expository text structure in reading and writing. In D. Muth (Ed.), Children's comprehension of text: Research into practice (pp. 167-184). Newark: International Reading Association.

Riding, P., Fowell, S., & Levy, P. (1995). An action ressearch approach to curriculum development. (http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/academic/I-M/is/lecturer/paper2.html).

Roe, M. F. (1991, December). Portfolios: From mandate to implementation. Paper presented at the 41st Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference. Palm Springs, C.A.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). The reader the text the poem - The transactional theory of the literary work. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1985). The transactional theory of the literary work. In C. R. Cooper (Ed.), Researching response to literature and the teaching of literature (pp. 33-53). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Rothwell-Wagner, L., & Brock, D. (1996). Using portfolios to mediate literacy instruction and assessment. In L. Dixon-Krauss. Vygotsky in the classroom: Mediated literacy instruction and assessment (pp. 161-174). New York: Longman Publishers.

Rousch, P.D. (1972). A psycholinguistic investigation into the relationship between prior conceptual knowledge, oral reading miscues, silent reading, and post-reading performance. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University.

Rupert, P. R. & Brueggeman, M. A. (1986). Reading journals: Making the language connection in college. Journal of Reading, 30, 1, 26-33.

Russell, T. & Munby, H. (1993). The authority of experience in learning to teach: Message from a Physics methods class. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta. ERIC Document 362 475.

Sadow, M. W. (1980). The relationship between the contextual appropriateness of errors and comprehension - A Commentary of Kendall and Hood's study of differently-disabled readers. Journal of Reading Behavior, 12, 3, 243-247.

Sampson, M. R., & Briggs, L. D. (1981). What does research say about beginning reading? Reading Horizons, 21, 2, 114-118.

Schlieper, A. (1977). Oral reading errors in relation to grade and level of skill. Reading Teacher, 31, 3, 283-287.

Schon, D. (1983). The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action. New York: Basic Books.

Seltzer, D. A. (1989). Assessment and early childhood education. Overland Park, KS: Research and Training Associates, Inc. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 330 446.

Sheppard, L. A. (1989). Why we need better assessments. Educational Leadership, 46, 7, 4-9.

Simms, N. (1994). Organizing the classroom for responsive evaluation: Pushing ahead in years 3-6. In B. Cambourne & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 60-82). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Simner, M. L. (1993). A position paper on beginning reading instruction in Canadian schools. Canadian Journal of School Psychology, 9, 1, 96-97.

Simons, H. D., & Ammon, P. R. (1987). The language of beginning reading texts Final Report. National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Ill Research Foundation, April, ERIC Document 284 165.

Simons, H. D., & Ammon, P. (1989). Child knowledge and primerese text: Mismatches and miscues. Research in the Teaching of English, 23, 4, 380-398.

Simpson, M. K. (1986). A teacher's gift: Oral reading and the reading response journal. Journal of Reading, 30,1, 45-50.

Smith, C. B. (1991, August). Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts: What are we doing now? Where are we going? Proceedings of a National Symposium ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Bloomington, Indiana.

Smith, C. (1994). Setting the future agenda. Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts. In C. Smith (Ed.), Literacy assessment for today's schools (pp. 229-234). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Smith, G. G., & Keister, D. (1996). Learning about literacy through retelling. In Collins, M. D. and Moss, B. G. (Eds.), Literacy assessment for today's schools (pp. 6-32). Monograph of The College Reading Association, Virginia.

Smith, K. J. (1977). Efficiency in beginning reading: Possible effects on later comprehension. In S.F. Wanat (Eds.), Language and Reading Comprehension. Linguistics and reading series: 2. Arlington, VA: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Sorenson, N. L. (1993). Evaluation of literacy development: Framing the process. Reading Research and Instruction. 32, 4, 66-75.

Spradley, J. P. (1980). Participant observation. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Squire, J. (1987). (Ed.). The state of reading assessment. The Reading Teacher. 40, 8, 724-788.

Stake, R. (1975). Evaluating the arts in education: A responsive approach. Columbus OH: Merrill.

Stanley, N. V. (1996). Vygotsky and multicultural assessment and instruction. In L. Dixon-Krauss (Ed.), Vygotsky in the classroom: Mediated literacy instruction and assessment (pp. 133-148). New York: Longman Publishers.

Stanovich, K. E. (1980). Toward an interactive-compensatory model of individual differences in the development of reading fluency. Reading Research Quarterly, 16, 1, 32-71.

Stanovich, K. E. (1991). Word recognition: Changing perspective. In R. Barr, M. L., Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal., & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), Handbook of reading research: Vol 2. (pp. 418-452). New York: Longman.

Stein, N., & Glenn, C. (1975). A developmental study of children's recall of story material. Paper presented to the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver.

Stein, N. L., & Glenn, C. G. (1979). An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children. In R. Freedle (Ed.), New Directions in discourse processing V.2. (pp. 53-120). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Stein, N. L., & Nezworski, T. (1978). The effects of organization and instructional set on story memory. Illinois Univ., Urbana Center for the Study of Reading. ERIC Document ED 149 327.

Stiggins, R. (1991). Assessing reading proficiency (Video recording). Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Strong, C. (1985, May). The dynamics of cueing strategy usage in grades two through four. SESA Project report. Paper presented at the 30th annual meeting of the annual meeting of the international reading association, New Orleans, LA. Institute for Educational research and Development, Memorial University of Newfoundland, ERIC Document 263 527.

Sutherland, Z. (1991). Patterns of response to literature. In Z. Sutherland, B. Hearne & R. Sutton (Eds.), The best in children's books (Chapter 14). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, B. (1980). Children's memory for expository text after reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 15, 3, 399-411.

Tchudi, S. (1991). Planning and assessing the curriculum in the English Language Arts. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. ERIC 340 016.

Teale, W., Hiebert, E., & Chittenden, C. (1987). Assessing young children's literacy development. The Reading Teacher, 40, 8, 772-77.

Thomson, J. (1987). Understanding teenagers' reading: Reading processes and the teaching of literature. Australia: Australian Association of the Teaching of English Inc.

Tierney, R. J. (1998). Literacy assessment reform: Shifting beliefs, principled possibilities, and emerging practices. The Reading Teacher, 51, 5, 374-389.

Tierney, R. J., Bridge, C & Cera, M. J. (1978/1979). The discourse processing operations of children. Reading Research Quarterly, 14, 4, 539-73.

Tierney, R. J., Carter, M. A., & Desari, L. E. (1991). Portfolio assessment in the reading-writing classroom. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon Publishers Inc.

Tierney, R. J., & Cunningham, J. W. (1984). Research on teaching reading comprehension. In P. D. Pearson (Ed.), Handbook of reading research (pp. 609-656). White Plains, NY: Longman.

Turbill, J. (1994). Getting a nut and bolt with the same thread: Matching evaluation theory with language learning theory. In B. Cambourne., & J. Turbill. (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 9-15). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Valencia, S. W. (1990a). Alternative assessment: Separating the wheat from the chaff. The Reading Teacher. 44, 1. 60-1.

Valencia, S. W. (1990b). Evaluating the reading context. The Reading Teacher. 44, 4. 330-332.

Valencia, S. W. (1990c). A portfolio approach to classroom reading assessment: The whys, whats and hows. The Reading Teacher. 43, 4. 338-40.

Valencia, S. W. (1990c). Miscue analysis in the classroom. The Reading Teacher. 44, 3. 252-253.

Valencia, S. W., & Commeyras, M. (1992). Commerically available language arts performance-based assessments. The Reading Teacher. 45, 6. 468-70.

Valencia, S. W., McGinley, W. & Pearson, D, P. (1990). Assessing reading and writing: Building a more complete picture for middle school assessment. Technical Report No. 500, Mass: Bolt, Beranek & Newman, Inc, Illinois University, Urbana Center for the Study of Reading.

Valencia, S. W., Hiebert, E. H., & Afflerbach, P. P. (1994). Authentic assessment: Practices and possibilities. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Valencia, S. W., & Pearson, P. D. (1987). Reading assessment: Time for change. The Reading Teacher. 40, 8. 726-732.

Valencia, S. W., & Peters, C.W. (1991). You can't have authentic assessment without authentic content. The Reading Teacher. 44, 8. 590-591.

Valencia, S. W., & Sulzby, E. (1991). Assessment of emergent literacy: Storybook reading. The Reading Teacher. 44, 7. 498-500.

Varnhagen, C. K. (1989). Development of causal reasoning in story recall and production. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, March, ERIC Document 306 546.

Villaume, S. (1994). Creating context within text: An investigation of primary-grade children's character introductions in stories. ERIC Document 269 769.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Warren, S. (1994). Collaborating on assessment: Changing the culture of assessment and evaluation. In B. Cambourne, B. & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 136-146). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Weaver, C. (1990). Understanding whole language: From principles to practice. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Weber, R .M. (1968). The study of oral reading errors: A survey of the literature. Reading Research Quarterly, 4, 1, 96-119.

Weber, R. M. (1970a). First graders' use of grammatical context in reading. In H. Levin & J. Williams (Eds.), Basic studies in reading (pp. 147-163). New York: Basic Books.

Weber, R. M. (1970b). A linguistic analysis of first-grade reading errors. Reading Research Quarterly, 5, 3, 427-451.

Wiggins, G. (1989). A true test: Toward more authentic and equitable assessment. Phi Delta Kappan, 70, 9, 703-713.

Wildman, D. M., & Kling, M. (1978). Semantic, syntactic and spatial anticipation in reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 14, 2, 128-164.

Williams, R. (1994). Creating a community of learners for change. In B. Cambourne & J. Turbill (Eds.), Responsive evaluation: Making valid judgments about student literacy (pp. 113-135). Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Williamson, L. E., & Young, F. (1974). The IRI and RMI diagnostic concepts should be synthesized. Journal of Reading Behavior, 6, 2, 183-194.

Wiser, B., & Dorsey, S. (1994). Alternative assessment in Columbus, Ohio: What we're doing now (not much). What we're going to be doing (a lot more). In C. Smith (Ed.), Alternative assessment of performance in the language arts: what are we doing now? Where are we going? (pp. 47-57). ERIC/RCS, Indiana University.

Wixson, K. L. (1979). Miscue analysis: A critical review. Journal of Reading Behavior, 11, 2, 163-175.

Wolf, D. P. (1989). Portfolio assessment: Sampling student work. Educational Leadership, 46, 7, 35-39.

Wolf, D. P., LeMahieu, P. G., & Eresh, J. (1992). Good measure: Assessment as a tool for educational reform. Educational Leadership, 49, 8, 8-13.

Wolf, K. P. (1993). From informal to informed assessment: Recognizing the role of the classroom teacher. Journal of Reading, 36, 7, 518-523.

Wollman-Bonilla, J. E. (1989). Reading journals: Invitations to participate in literature. The Reading Teacher, 43, 2, 112-120.

Wollman-Bonilla, J. (1991). Response journals: Inviting students to think and write about literature. Toronto: Scholastic.

Woodward, H. (1992). Negotiated evaluation. Sydney, NSW Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.

Yocum, J. A. (1987). Children's responses to literature read aloud in the classroom. Ohio State University.

Yunginger-Gehman, J. (1991, May). A pilot project for portfolio assessment in Chapter 1 program. Paper presented at the 36th Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, Las Vegas, NV.

Zimiles, H., & Kuhns, M. (1976). A developmental study of the retention of narrative material. Final Report National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C. ERIC Document 160 978.

Zuber-Skerritt, O. (1982). Action research in higher education. London: Kogan.

Appendix A
Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Running Records

Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Running Records

1. Graphic Cues

Miscues using graphic cues are described as having visual or graphic similarity to the text through attention to letters in various locations of words; refers to the utilization and lack of use of graphic cues; usually described in combination with other cues and strategies.

1.1 Visual/Graphic Similarity

Refers to miscues that are look alike to the text or visually resemble the text; describes a range of visual or graphic similarity in letters and word structures between miscues and text words, e.g., having some graphic/visual similarity, close resemblance to text, or not looking like text; includes reversals as well as examples of a range of miscues that are visually similar to the text.

Examples:
1334:Dec:2:Cl:A:(there-three): graphic similarity
8204:April:74:K3:M:(jolly-jody): some visual similarity but not attending to all letters
277:Sept:l6:Rk:K: [using] word configuration
1302:Dec:K:CK:J:(met-went): he reverses his letters.

1.2 Location

Describes graphic similarities between miscues and text words in beginning, middle, ending and combination of word locations; includes general statement regarding facility or difficulty with attending to various word locations as well as examples.

Beginning

Miscues described as having same beginning letter(s) or first syllable; described through direct statements regarding use or absence of word beginnings; includes reference to word beginnings in combination with other strategies, e.g., pictures and context clues as well as examples of word beginnings.

Examples:
2003:Oct:32:An2:M:(showed-shouted): same beginning /sh/
2495:May:Overall:J2:S: focused a lot on beginnings and guessed the rest.

Middle

Defined mostly through examples indicating attention to middle letters of words; includes direct statements regarding visual or graphic similarities between miscues and text words in middle locations.

Examples:
8253:May:8B:K3:M:(halted-hated): doesn't see the /l/
2103:March:37:An2:A: she can confirm it with visual similarity but doesn't do the middle of word.

Ending

Refers to direct statements regarding facility or difficulty with attending to, looking at or giving ending letters of words and to the amount of endings attended to or missed; lack of visual/graphic similarity in ending locations of words described as omissions, changes or adding on endings.

Examples:
91:Feb:l5:Sk:A: same ending letter
l394:Feb:3:C1:J:(was-said): looks at /s/ at end of the word
l073:March:7:Ll:A:(monkeys-monkey): omits ending.

Combination

Includes statements regarding relying on or attending to letters in several word locations at once with word beginnings and endings most frequently cited; also refers to beginning and middle as well as beginning, middle and ending locations; includes examples of letters in combination of locations.

Examples:
1:Feb:21:Jk:K: uses beginning and ending
2240:June:42:An2:M:(chased-closed): look alike in beginning, middle
8221:May:8B:K3:M: (climate-comet) similar in /c/ /m/ /t/.

1.3 Word Recognition

Describes the nature of word recognition skills, e.g., recognition of real words and sight vocabulary as well as specific words causing difficulty; refers to fluency and strategies of syllabication, attention to "little words;" includes general statements regarding the presence or absence of word recognition as well as examples.

Examples:
1359:Dec:2:CK:J: each time he leaves out /chased/ and /little/
7971:Nov:61:P3:A: but it's not a real word
7667:Oct:78:Li3:S: basic sight words he tends to miss.

Syllabication

Refers to general statements regarding facility or difficulty with the skill to syllabicate as well as to recognize smaller words and root words within words.

Examples:
2572:May:8B:S2:M: uses syllabication to attack unfamiliar words
l441:March:4:Cl:J: he doesn't see the little words yet.

Fluency

Described as reading phrases, as having speed and not making many omissions, hesitations or repetitions when reading; includes direct statements regarding the presence or absence of fluency as well as examples.

Examples:
2337:March:46:Jon2:S: fluent reader

2296A:March:8C:Jon2:S: but with the number of repetitions the fluency is not there - he has to lose something - - if children are stumbling and it's taking them long, they give up and don't pay attention to what they're reading
7845:Oct:78:M3:A:(then-Omission): omits words
7514:Nov:61:Li3:R: repeated a lot but that's Linus; Linus drags things out; needs to be more focused; maybe repeats just to keep himself on track to keep it in his mind.

2. Phonic Cues

Miscues using phonic cues are described as "sounded out;" includes direct statements regarding facility or difficulty with phonic cues in various locations of words as well as phonic cues in combination with other cues and strategies.

2.1 General: Using Phonics & Sounding

Phonics refers to letter-sound relationships, word attack skills and decoding. Words often sounded out include unfamiliar words and self-corrections; describes a range of use of phonic cues or sounding out from "used mostly" to not sounding out or using phonics; includes descriptions of phonics difficulties including not blending sounds, inserting consonants, concentrating on decoding and not comprehending or substituting meaningful words; refers to the quality of sounding out or using phonics as well as examples of facility and difficulty with phonics.
Examples:
2700:Nov:52:M2:M: using phonics
8084:April:5:An3:S:(from-off): missed /fr/ sound
2733:Jan:54:M2:M:(clamp-cl -amp): sounds out but doesn't put it together.

Vowels

Refers to general and specific instances of vowel difficulties;
specific vowel difficulties include confusion of long and short vowel sounds, vowel combination and r-controlled difficulties and omission of vowels especially in medial position.
Examples:
2594:May:8B:T2:A: uses wrong vowel sounds
8198:April:74:K3:M: doesn't have long vowel /ei/
8206:April:74:K3:M:(tickle-tockle): trouble with short vowels.

2.2 Location

Consists of use of facility and difficulty with phonic cues in beginning (mostly), middle, ending and a combination of locations.

Beginning

Refers to direct statements regarding facility and difficulty with using, attending to and saying initial letter sounds; also includes examples of beginning sounds.

Examples:
2229:May:41:An2:M: only using beginning sounds
154:Nov:24:Mk:J: uses initial /s/ sound.

Middle
Refers to general statements noting difficulty with middle sounds.
Examples:
2297:March:8C:Jon2:S: more trouble with middle sounds than beginning
2291:March:8C:Jon2:S: /st/ blend in the middle.

Endings
Described through general statements noting facility and difficulty with ending sounds; difficulty is described as omission of endings. Examples:
2430:March:37:J2:S: weak on ending sounds
8197:April:74:K3:M: omits endings.

Combination
Refers to use of phonic cues in a combination of locations, e.g., beginning and ending sounds; includes examples.
Examples:
2432:May:8A:J2:M:(seek-sneak): using beginning and ending sounds
8218:May:8B:K3:M:(variety-victory): only got /v/ and /y/ sound.

Phonics and Other Cues/Strategies
Phonic cues are described as used in combination with syllabication, visual similarity, pictures, guessing, graphic and visual cues, visual memory and self-correcting.
Examples:
1382:Dec:2B:Cl:J: he's using pictures and beginning sounds ... he didn't say /tunnel/ for /bridge/
2888:April:56:M2:M: relies on beginning sounds and graphic similarity, e.g., /huge-hungry/
2360:Oct:33:J2:M: any time he self-corrects he relied on phonics.

3. Contextual Cues
Refers to direct statements regarding the presence or absence of use of context and background knowledge, language, meaning making, sense making and picture cues; describes a range of use of contextual cues as well as examples; described as used in combination with other cues and strategies.

3.1 Utilization of Context and Background Knowledge
Background knowledge refers to children's ability to relate texts to their experiences and to their familiarity with texts and text language and concepts. Use of context refers to familiarity with the topic; also described through general statements regarding the

presence or absence of background knowledge and context as well as reasons for not using context.

Examples:
8291:Nov:96:J3:M: is using context
2974:May:8B:St2:L: lost the total context here
7695:Oct:78:Li3:A:(spied-spotted): *spotted* is a more natural word to say than /spied/ in the context of the sea.

3.2 Using Language

Refers to general statements regarding the extent to which oral and text and literary language are used to predict text language. Use of language is determined through the extent to which miscues sound like language through familiar phrases and expressions and appropriate syntactic substitutions; includes direct statements noting the absence of oral language and reasons for not using language cues (including over-predicting language, immature oral language, unfamiliarity with author's grammar and structure); includes examples of use and absence of oral and text language.

Examples:
49:April:18:Jk:K: not using his language
7887:April:84:M3:R: "*he only found a few* /he found only a few" - puts it in his own language and it makes perfect sense
8213:April:74:K3:M:maybe she doesn't have an idea of what /furrows/ are (we calls them drills in Newfoundland)
2304:March:46:Jon2:S: he's over-predicting his language ; almost like he's concluding what should be there - almost like he's ahead of himself
1358:Dec:2:Cl:J: is getting the pattern /Then there were three/.

3.3 Reading for Meaning

Refers to using and making meaning through adding to and bringing meaning by omitting text, associating concepts, not making many miscues and self-correcting; also refers to losing meaning or not using meaning caused by amount of miscues and lack of self-corrections; describes a range of making meaning including making meaning in "bits and pieces," miscues being meaningful in only part of the sentence or text.

Examples:
277:Feb:31:Cl:J: is reading for meaning and knows the story but not looking at the words
8243:May:8B:K3:M:(beak-break): not meaningful
2124:March:38:An2:A: phrase is meaningful but not in the sentence
2296:March:8C:Jon2:S: is reading for meaning - self-corrects a lot.

3.4 Making Sense

Refers to a range of sense making from making sense to not making sense or making sense of a part of the sentence through substituting own language, omitting unknown words, rereading and not saying anything. Not making sense is described as just reading

words and/or making many miscues. Includes general statements regarding the presence or absence of making sense.
Examples:
280:Feb:31:Ck:J: he makes sense and "his story" fits in Justas well as what's there
7834:April:84:M3:R:(other-Omission): "*the boy did*/the other boy did" makes sense either way
17:April:22:Sk:K: now she knows it has to make sense (unlike February) and sometimes will not say anything.

3.5 Using Picture Clues

General statements that children are using and not using, relying on or interpreting picture clues when reading; includes reference to picture clues used and not used.
Examples:
2459:May:8A:J2:M: could see the pictures to help him with words such as /chimney/ and /climb/ 1010:March:14:Al:S: relies totally on pictures [stage: pictures]
271:June:16:Ek:J&K: is not using pictures this time.

3.6 Using Contextual Cues in Combination with Other Cues and Strategies

Contextual cues described as used in combination with other contextual cues including picture cues and graphic and phonic cues; also refers to difficulties when using a combination of strategies.
Examples:
1462:March:4:Ml:J: was using context, phonics, familiarity with patterns
1381:Dec:2B:Cl:J: he's using pictures and beginning sounds ... he didn't say /tunnel/ for /bridge/.
2233:May:41:An2:A: this indicates her knowledge of pictures, her language and ability to use her language of the world.

4. Author's Meaning

4.1 Amount and Kind of Meaning Change

Describes a range of author's meaning change from not changing, or interfering with the author's meaning and causing minor meaning change, to ignoring, interrupting or not attending to the author's meaning.
Examples:
2946:Feb:5:R:St2:(plucked-picked): meaning the same
2516:Nov:37:S2:A: not a lot of meaning difference between /flea/ and /fly/.
8109:May:37:An3:S: (wakeful---weeping): whole change of meaning.

4.2 Reasons for Losing Author's Meaning

Reasons include word recognition difficulties, over-attending to word recognition and decoding, unfamiliarity with the meaning of text vocabulary and not attending to the author's meaning.

Examples:
162:Nov:24:Mek:J: missed the meaning - too many words she didn't know
2840:March:47:M2:M: maybe because he's so taken up with decoding he may miss some of the story and some of his miscues would lead me to believe he's not comprehending.

5. Other

Refers to the nature of text, nature of child and other strategies as contributing to or hindering oral reading.

5.1 Nature of Child

Includes involvement, interest in, and attitude towards reading, the specific topic, story or genre as well as confidence in reading; refers to home and previous grade experiences with exposure to print including understanding of sound-symbol correspondence.
Examples:
332:June:19:Rk:K: but doesn't have the same interest in reading, e.g., doesn't reach for books like the others
2412:Nov:34:J2:L: he did very well here - obviously an area of interest
238:June:28:Ak:J: lots of confidence
326:June:11:Rk:K: was reading before school.

5.2 Nature Of Text

Refers to general statements regarding the difficulty of texts and the nature of text language and pictures as contributing to or interfering with oral reading.

Text Difficulty

Texts are described in general terms ranging from easy to difficult.
Examples:
2518:Nov:37:S2:R: this I would consider an easy book for grade 2
8215:April:74:K3:M: this is kind of a hard passage.

Text Language

Describes the extent to which text language contains familiar, everyday words, phrases and expressions and natural text structures, patterns and rhythms or more difficult literary language including different word usage, unusual sentence structure, unconventional grammar, redundant language and compound descriptors; describes the extent to which contextual clues assist with word recognition and meaning.
Examples:
1055:Feb:6:Ll:J: /bandanna/ this is probably not a meaningful word to her - we don't call it that anymore
2570:May:8B:S2:M: this is all very sophisticated language for a 7 yr old
2876:April:56:M2:M: /I do so love/ is not common language
2194:May:40:An2:A:(a-I): is following a "what if I" pattern
1357:Dec:2:Cl:J: first verse will be worse anyway

2328:March:46:Jon2:M: text structure doesn't fit - defies good writing conventions, e.g., beginning a sentence with /And/.

Text Pictures

Refers to the presence or absence of pictures in texts for certain words and components of texts to assist with word recognition and to tell the story; describes the quality of contextual cues provided by pictures as ranging from appropriate, strong, and clear cues to distractions or hinderances; also includes specific references to pictures helping or not helping with the oral reading of texts.

Examples:
287:June:27:Ck:J: there are no pictures for these words
82:Feb:l5:Sk:K: pictures don't really help
256:June:28:Ek:J: not a good picture for /hiding/ and picture does show feet turned in.

5.3 Other Strategies

Includes general statements regarding the presence or absence of guessing or risk-taking and self-correcting; also refers to the amount of other strategies.

General Presence or Absence

Includes statements describing an informal amount of other strategies as well as the presence or absence of strategies as determined by the number of miscues.

Examples:
l39:April:22:Sk:J: needs to be told more - doesn't have as many strategies and background information
1117:April/May:8C:Ll:L: fantastic reading - obviously has a good understanding of a variety of strategies to help her read unfamiliar texts
80A:June:l9:Mk:J: if only 2 miscues, he must have the strategies.

Guessing/Risk-Taking

Refers to the presence or absence of informal as well as specific amount of guessing or predicting unknown words; described as often used in combination with other cuing systems; includes reasons for and for not guessing including lack of familiarity with text, being afraid to guess or not knowing how to guess.

Examples:
2390:Nov:36:J2:M: guesses a word x3
44:Feb:21:Jk:An: guessed at more words - guessed at 2 and got them right
2864:April:56:M2:M:(hungry-huge): beginning sounds and guesses;
l49:June:l9:Dk:K: will stop if she doesn't know the word.

Self-Correcting

Refers to a range of self-correcting from lots to not much; reasons cited for and for not self-correcting include reading for meaning, making sense, familiarity with text words,

size of words, using context, picture clues, graphics, phonics and language; includes examples of self-corrections.
Examples:
2883:April:56:M2:A: self-corrects
8273:Overall:E3:M: lots of self-corrections
1448:March:4:C1:J: 3-4 self-corrections and a lot of guesses have approximated the word
1464:March:4:M1:J: overall: if he did make a mistake and it didn't make sense, he'd self-correct
2360:Oct:33:J2:M: any time he self-corrects he relied on phonics.

Concepts About Print

Refers to understanding of letters, numbers, word concepts, 1:1 correspondence, relation between words and pictures, story structure, directionality and of print containing a message.
Examples:
1012:March:14:A1:S: doesn't understand 1:1 correspondence
1003:Feb:13:A1::S: confuses letters and numbers
1004:Feb:13:A1:S: doesn't know a word from a letter.

6. General Evaluative

Refers to the number of miscues, levels and percentages of word recognition, levels of texts used, descriptive evaluative statements as well as general statements about reading development.

6.1 Number of Miscues

Includes reference to the informal as well as specific number of miscues; includes comparisons among children regarding their number of miscues.
206:June:26:Mek:J: not many errors
1453:Nov:14:M1:A: 3 errors = 83%
1319:Dec:1:C1:J: he missed more words than the other children.

6.2 Levels; Percentages

Levels and percentages are calculated based on word recognition accuracy; texts are described as on certain word recognition levels; word recognition percentages are used to determine appropriateness of texts which are organized into emergent and independent levels of reading development; includes grade level expectations of text vocabulary.
Examples:
8275:Nov:93/48:R3:B: 99%
3:Oct:20:Jk:K: 97% - Level III
2943:Feb:5:St2:L: Level 20
2907:May:50:M2:M:(was-so): common miscues for grade 2.

6.3 General Descriptors

Refers to adjectives or descriptors of oral reading.

Examples:

194:Feb:25:Mk:J: this is fine
1389:Feb:3:Cl:A:(Mommy-momma): ok
2546:May:8B:S2:S: good grasp of oral reading.

6.4 Development

Refers to general descriptions about reading development including reliance on pictures, use of language and phonics cues as well as syllabication.

Examples:

1412:Feb:3:Cl:J: shows progression [away from relying on pictures] relying on language
29:Feb:21:Jk:K: was an early decoder; relying on syllabication
1092:April:8B:Ll:A:(briefly-brief lie): she's at the first stage in syllabication (she syllabicates but doesn't make a real word).

Appendix B
Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Oral Retellings

Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Oral Retellings

1. Story Structure

Retellings reflecting knowledge of story structure are described as having a story sense and sequential concept of story through inclusion of information from various locations of story structure, e.g., beginning, middle and ending; also described through general comments regarding the presence or absence of evidence of knowledge of story structure.

1.1 Story Sense

Refers to telling what sounds like a story or an overall view of the story, plan or story schema; story sense is also exhibited through sequential and fluent retellings.
Examples:
6031:Nov:36:An2:A: she doesn't have a plan or schema in her mind to retell the story, e.g., an understanding that beginning, middle and ending is needed
6153:March:46:Jo2:S: from the retelling I didn't get an overall view of the story
485:March:2:Sk:B: tells a story rather than recite facts.

1.2 Sequence

Refers to retellings told in the right order, that are fluent and cohesively organized through concepts, themes, connectors and through relating text parts to the whole text to tell a story; includes direct statements regarding the presence or absence of sequence or fluency of an entire text or portion of; includes reference to amount of sequence, as well as descriptors and examples of sequence.
Examples:
6123:Oct:33:Jo2:S: gives sequence
527:Feb:2:Ak:J: sequence is off, e.g., he checked his pocket after his bath
426:Oct:lA:Mk:A: tells events but not in a connected way - relationship between events is not clearly stated.

2. Location Of Story Structure

Describes recall of information from the beginning, middle, ending or a combination of locations.

2.1 Beginning

Defined through identification, description and actions of characters; also includes reference to the number of characters recalled as well as specific references to setting, purpose, events and problems; includes direct statements noting the presence or absence of beginnings.
Examples:
8352:June:62:P3:R: identified main characters Billy and Blaze also minor character, dog Rex

8497:Nov:61:M3:R: recognizes change [development] in the sultan, e.g., that initially *he wanted everything to be perfect* but gradually realizes that *everything doesn't have to be perfect but at least it's alive*
425:Oct:lA:Mk:A: gives setting
8534:June:66:M3:R: reason given/states the problem up front ... *because he wanted to prove his friends that Santa was real.*
4139:March:8:Cul:J: ... got beginning.

2.2 Middle

Refers to direct statements regarding the presence or absence of information from the middle of texts, the amount, nature as well as examples; includes recall of problems and the number and kind of events recalled or omitted.

Examples:
6276B:May:7:Ja2:S: usually starts with good beginning but omits lot of middle and main problem in story
6029:Nov:36:An2:M: there's a gap in the middle; the second paragraph was crucial to the retelling but she omits this in retelling - she omits the mouse's motive in the retelling (this is in second paragraph) and the consequence of the mouse running up and down walls;
Oct:63:Nov:61:M3:R: recalls sufficient number of events.

2.3 Ending

Refers to the conclusion or resolution; may include direct statements regarding the presence or absence of endings as well as descriptions of endings.

Examples:
6331:Nov:37:S2:S: but brings it to a close
8318-I9:Nov:61:P3:R: conclusion given by P3 is more general than the text, e.g., Text: "... and together they went out of the palace into the garden to enjoy the fruit of the tree" P3: *and he was happy again.*
6061:March:37A:An2:S: ending is exactly what happened.

2.4 Combination

Defined through direct statements regarding the presence or absence of information from any combination of beginning, middle or ending locations of texts.

Examples:
402:Feb:l:Jk:K: [has] middle and ending
8433:Nov:61:Li3:A: even his middle and ending retelling are not put together clearly.

3. Text Focus/Literal

Describes retellings that do not go beyond what was given in the text and involve literal recall of details, text language and utilization of pictures.

3.1 Details
Details include reasons, problems, descriptions as well as characters' descriptions and actions; described through general statements regarding the presence or absence of details, the amount and examples of details.
Examples:
8401:May:7:An3:S: includes details
6127:Nov:36:Jo2:Mary: missed the crucial detail that it was the mouse that was the problem with the selling of the house
8618A:Nov:69:E3:M: lots of details
8424:April:71:Li3:R: the story lends itself to making inferences but Liam didn't go beyond what was given; didn't give back more than he read; kept it at a literal level.

3.2 Text Language
Refers to general statements regarding recall of text or book language, e.g., words, expressions or conversation; also refers to amount and examples of text language recalled.
Examples:
443:Overall:Mk:J: ... used a lot of book talk;
8369:Oct:47:An3:S: very straight forward and directly from book, e.g., ... *lovely wedding and bear ... best man*
8622:Nov:69:E3:A: she remembered conversations between characters.

3.3 Text Pictures
Refers to direct statements regarding recall of pictures and may include examples.
Examples:
2:8743:April:7:J3:A: maybe he remembered the parts that got text pictures - he remembers parts of the story that are represented by pictures
372:Feb/March:2:Rk:J: is reading/interpreting the pictures when he said *Peter went home*.

4. Beyond Text Focus/Inferencing
This category describes going beyond recall of texts to include own experiences, personal reactions to texts and own language; also refers to reading between the lines rather than literal level recalls.

4.1 Personal Reaction/Inferencing
Refers to making connections, inferencing, utilizing own experiences, identifying with and getting into texts and making them one's own; also refers to feelings regarding texts and valuative statements; includes direct statements regarding the presence or absence and examples of personal reactions.
Examples:
6065:May:7:An2:M: developmentally Andrea is willing to attempt a retelling but isn't confident enough in her reading to let go of the details and move to her experience with like situations (doesn't personalize);

4140:March:8:Cul:J: *They all sat by the fire* - they related to this as a result of the power outage
8531:June:66:M3:R: brings in feelings/includes feelings/responses of characters, e.g., *right sad... real nice, he was happy*
8745:April:7:J3:A: some interpreting is going on, e.g., *got very upset.*

4.2 Own Language

Defined through direct statements of the use of own language and vocabulary as well as specific examples of own language.
Examples:
404:Feb:l:Jk:K: no evidence of using book talk because he has transferred everything into his own language
6256:Nov:36:Ja2:S: uses his own language, e.g., *and he didn't really care*

5. Comprehension

Comprehension of texts is demonstrated through general understanding as well as specific understanding, e.g., summarizing, word meaning, identifying main ideas and problems, connecting, reasoning, clarity and accuracy.

5.1 Overall Understanding/Gist

Describes whether or not the retelling gives the gist, an overall picture or captures the essence of the story; also refers to direct statements of evidence of general understanding or making sense of texts especially at a literal level.
Examples:
6249:Nov:36:Jo2:M: has the gist of the story in the retelling
4007:April:11:A1:J: he only understands parts of the story ... his understanding is limited ... only has a certain gist of it ... only has a certain limited knowledge of it.

5.2 Main Idea

Refers to inclusion of the basic overall idea of the story as well as essential or important points and ideas, e.g., lesson and themes; also defined through direct statements regarding the inclusion of main ideas as well as instances of main ideas.
Examples:
4020:Feb:6:La1:A: she's got the main idea of the story;
8539:June:66:M3:R: infers underlying theme - do they believe in Santa
8616:Nov:69:E3:M: misses the "lesson" that he needed to think he
could do it, e.g., he thought he needed the potion.

5.3 Word Meaning

Refers to general statements regarding the presence or absence of word meaning.
Examples:
4047A:April:13:La1:J: ... we don't know how many words she sounded out and didn't know the meaning for

8327:Nov:61:P3:R: understands meaning of "chief steward."

5.4 Summarizing

Describes retellings that are concise and tell it in a nutshell, that get right to the point and pick out the highlights; refers to direct statements of evidence of summarizing as well as adjectives describing the nature of summarizing and examples of summarizing.

Examples:
8624:April:70:E3:M: she gets right to the point; that's it in a nut shell;
8302:Oct:60:P3:R: starts summarizing early in story; ... *and he started to make excuses about it... he was afraid he might fall and all those things*
359:Oct:lA:Rk:A: summarizes.

5.5 Problem and Resolution

Includes direct statements regarding recognition or omission of problems and/or resolutions and examples of problems and resolutions.

Examples:
8695:Sept:69:R3:A: she's focused on the problem and how it was solved
6329:Nov:37:S2:S: gets main problem - therefore has overall understanding;
8490:Nov:61:M3:R: he recognizes the events or problems, e.g., *And one day in autumn* ..., gives lst resolution (put a screen and painted a picture), identifies 2nd problem and its resolution (chief's daughter gave branches and it had snow on it; 2nd resolution: so he ordered a painter), identifies 3rd problem and its resolution (chief's daughter brings in a tree with pears on it; 3rd resolution: but the painter couldn't paint it); identifies the solution: that she removed the screen and the Sultan accepts that everything doesn't have to be perfect but at least it's alive.

5.6 Clarity/Accuracy

Refers to general comments regarding whether or not retellings are clear and accurate as well as the range and amount of accuracy; also described through examples of clarity and accuracy and reasons for accuracy or inaccuracy.

Examples:
8535:June:66:M3:A: his account is quite accurate
8691:Sept:69:R3:M: not clear that Sir Marmaduke is the person taking the drink
505:March:2:Dk:J: incorrect information - he and his mother didn't go out (he called his friend).

6. Other

The information in this category includes factors contributing to the quality of retellings such as the nature of task, text and child.

6.1 Nature of Task

Refers to direct statements regarding familiarity with, understanding of and facility with oral retelling tasks; other task factors include teachers' approaches.

Examples:
6508:Nov:52:M2:L... and maybe the first time he had this kind of task
6145:March:8C:Jo2:A: he tells the story in a round-about way - assumes that everybody else knows what's he's talking about;
524:Nov:29:Ak:J: may have done better if had heard the story twice (usual teaching situation).

6.2 Nature of Text

Refers to the genre and structure of texts, e.g., clarity, length, language and vocabulary; also includes the nature of content and appropriateness of pictures.
Examples:
8628:April:70:E3:A: and I think it's a hard story to get into because of text and language; ... the language doesn't seem very alive ..it's unnatural and lifeless but there are some nice words used
4027:March:7:La1:A: probably a more exciting story for Kindergarten; maybe this was too easy for Laura to retell and maybe she needed a text that was a little more intricate;
4142:March:8:Cul:A: also story provided a good picture as support to do this.

6.3 Nature Of Child

The quality of retellings is affected by the extent to which the child has experiences to relate to texts, the nature of the child's personality and interest in the text or topic, facility with oral or written language, competencies or skills such as attention span, memory and reading ability.
Examples:
4042:March:9:La1:J: she lacks background experiences which makes comprehension and vocabulary difficult; [because of this] this would not give a good indication of her reading
4103:May:3:He1:P: she should have gotten more from the pictures but she's not a risk-taker (it depends on the make up of the child) 4050:April:13:La1:J: it may not be the vocab - could be her interest in the story; you only throw back what sticks with you;
4010:April:12:A1:A: his oral language could be immature (his vocab and being able to use all the parts of language, e.g., verbs, adjectives, the language structures effectively to communicate and tell things) - his ability to handle language to let it do things for him
450A:Oct:lA:Sk:J: sentences are not short and choppy.

7. General Evaluative

Comments used to describe retellings are of a general evaluative nature, e.g., adjectives, amount recalled, grade expectations.
Examples:
6461:Oct:8A:V2:A: very good retelling;
8536:June:66:M3:A: he retells almost everything
412:Feb:l:Jk:J: whatever I'd expect for a Kindergarten he has it.

Appendix C
Categories and Descriptions of Written Retellings

Categories and Descriptions of Written Retellings

1. Structure

Understanding of story structure is shown through recall of the components of story structure, e.g., beginning, middle and ending. The retelling sounds like a story and is sequential.

1.1 Sense of Story Structure

Recall sounds like a story and can be followed.

Examples:

8652:Sept:78:E3:A: she doesn't have a schema for retelling (there's a structure that's used to relate a narrative)

4083:April:11B:La1:J: and tells it like a story, e.g., *we laughed* and gives a few examples

4074A:April:11B:La1:A: has written enough so the reader can follow through.

1.2 Sequence

Events are recalled in the order that they happened in the story and may be organized around the story pattern or a theme. Events are cohesive and are tied together like a story through the use of connectors.

Examples:

8636:Sept:77:E3:A: yes, she's retold the story in the sequence that it happened

6470:Nov:49B:V2:M: shows the sequence - 1, 2, 3 weeks pattern of bear's growth from dependence to independence

6561:Nov:49B:M2:L: he just makes a list of happenings instead of tying it all together.

2. Location of Structure

Consists of recall of information from the story beginning, middle, ending or a combination of locations.

2.1 Beginning

Refers to general and specific recall of characters and characteristics of, references to setting and problem and direct statements that beginning was recalled.

Examples:

8749:Sept:78:J3:A: then goes on to tell something about her *people used her as a clock*

8708:Sept:78:R3:M: states the problem up front

4082:April:11B:La1:J: got beginning.

2.2 Middle/Events

Refers to statements regarding the presence or absence of middles including the nature of the plot, the presence or absence of events as well as kinds of events.

Examples:

8664:Oct:46:E3:M: comments on the events that stick out in her mind

6198:Nov:33B:Jo2:S: nothing there regarding the middle of the story, e.g., that he couldn't sleep and that the other dinosaurs came to Boland's help when he was really hurt
8727:Nov:80:R3:M: has all the main events and parts - understands the story pretty well ... includes Drufus' kindness.

2.3 Ending
Refers to whether or not the story is finished and the ending or solution given.
Examples:
8566:Sept:78:K3:A: she's concluded it - has put an ending in
6413:March:50B:S2:S: ending done well, e.g., the fact that she wanted so much they lost everything.

2.4 Combination
Refers to the presence or absence of more than one component or location of story structure.
Examples:
4075:April:llB:La1:A: has beginning, middle and ending.

3. Text Focus/Literal
Includes literal recall of information from the text such as details and text language.

3.1 Details
Includes direct statements as to whether or not literal details are recalled; refers to characters and happenings and characteristics of.
Examples:
8561:Sept:78:K3:M: she's got all the main details in
6215:March:37B:Jo2:S: but a lot of detail missed, e.g., didn't mention the ghost story and that he got the bear for security, not clear that he went home
6093:March:37B:An2:M: again tells the literal details of the story and never mentions Ira being worried or learning a lesson.

3.2 Text Language
Includes recall of text vocabulary, phrases, conversations, and adjectives; may follow the same pattern as the text.
Examples:
4059:Jan:37B:La1:J: she remembered a lot of the vocabulary
8715:Sept:78:R3:M: mentions that only the man in the grocery store watched - she recalls phrases
6618:March:50B:M2:L: makes very pointed statements but does give some conversation between the fisherman and his wife.

4. Beyond Text Focus/Inferencing

Includes information that goes beyond literal recall of text details and language through utilization of one's own language, personal responses and interpretations of texts.

4.1 Response/Reaction

Refers to direct statements regarding the presence or absence of a response or reaction; includes expression of feelings for and identification with characters and their problems and indications that texts were enjoyed.
Examples:
6568:Nov:49B:M2:M: I got feelings, e.g., *crying his heart out* and from the pictures we get a feeling for the bear when he couldn't catch salmon
6403:March:50B:S2:L: It is obvious that he liked the book.

4.2 Own Interpretation/Inferencing

Refers to retelling from one's own point of view or interpretation, making connections, drawing conclusions and adding to texts.
Examples:
8581:Nov:80:K3:M: she assumes it was his mom he was calling to (makes it personal and puts her own slant on things)
8751:Oct:46:J3:M: draws a conclusion, e.g., ... *who did not like school*
8573:Oct:46:K3:M: *He was afraid ... to* - makes good connection.

4.3 Own Language

Written language including words and phrases is similar to one's oral language.
Examples:
6554:Nov:49B:M2:L: has made an attempt to sound like his oral language capabilities
6196:Nov:33B:Jo2:S: *fierce* is his own language.

5. Comprehension

Includes information that indicates understanding of texts through a general sense of the story as well as specific understanding through recall of problems and events, summarizing, inferencing, drawing conclusions and accuracy.

5.1 General Understanding/Gist

Gives a general sense of the story through sufficient recall of events or essential parts and story flow; includes direct statements regarding the presence or absence of understanding or gist.
Examples:
4110:April:llB:He1:P: got the gist of the story; got a good part of the story
6468:Nov:49B&50B:V2:M: both Magic Fish and Bear flow - good story sense
8633:Sept:77:E3:M: she's got the sense of the story; tells the important parts (the whole

theme was that Sonya wanted to be a friend to Amy and she has the friendship in there as well as the misunderstanding and the answer to this misunderstanding; she understands it.

5.2 Summarizes
Refers to combining several components of text to get "straight to the point," "right into the problem" or the identification of themes; may include direct statements as to the presence or absence of summaries.
Examples:
8750:Sept:78:J3:A: he got the real idea of how to summarize - he gets right into the problem
6563B:Nov:49B:M2:L: does not give a summary or general statements but takes it right from the book
8746:Sept:78:J3:M: good at summarizing.

5.3 Main Idea
Refers to the presence or absence of the main part or lesson of the story achieved through connecting details to get the big picture.
Examples:
8563:Sept:78:K3:A: in a sense she was able to get to the crux of the story
8644:Sept:78:E3:M: she leaves out the main part of the story - people's reactions to the fact that Maxie didn't make noises (she only mentions Mrs. Trueheart)
6289:March:37B:Ja2:M: doesn't mention what Ira learned from all this.

5.4 Accuracy
Indicates correctness or incorrectness of recall of story structure, details and inferences.
Examples:
4109:April:11B:He1:A: but the information about them [the events] is not accurate
8643:Sept:78:E3:M: little incorrect detail - she moved the cage to the front window and the cat to the back window.

5.5 Problem
Includes direct statements as to the presence or absence of the main struggle or problem and resolution of the problem.
Examples:
6203:Nov:33B:Jo2:A: and identifies the characters and their problem situation (he was afraid of Tyrone, the mean dinosaur)
8650:Sept:78:E3:A: she doesn't say how the problem got solved - the events that solved the problem; she touches on it with Mrs. Trueheart but doesn't go into it.

6. Other
Information in this category includes factors contributing to the quality of retellings, e.g., the nature of text, task and child.

6.1 Nature of Text

Textual features including reading level, amount and nature of pictures and the structure of texts are described as determining the appropriateness of texts for retellings.

Examples:

4058:Jan:37B:La1:A: this is easier text to retell, e.g., she has all the pictures to help her retell

6201:Nov:33B:Jo2:S: it's a sequential story and easy to remember

6486:March:50B:V2:M: Shane does well on this also; this is a story that seems to lend itself to retellings (it has a strong story line) and they write lots.

6.2 Nature of Task

Includes familiarity with and understanding of the retelling task; refers to teachers' approaches, directions and expectations, e.g., prior reading of the text and access to or use of the text as an aid during retelling; also refers to children's interest in and difficulty with the written retelling task.

Examples:

8725:Nov:80:R3:M:and takes for granted that we know who the pronouns refer to, e.g., we don't know who the boy is talking to

6385:Nov:49B:S2:M: this is what happens when they try to tell every bit of it - they run out of steam

8550:Sept:78:K3:M: must have access to the book to keep the time frame straight

6384:Nov:49B:S2:L: I believe he knew the story but maybe time was a factor here.

6.3 Nature of Child

Refers to the child's interest in the written retelling task, control and clarity of language and the nature of the child's memory and listening skills.

Examples:

6570:Nov:49B:M2:L: but is a very vocal child; reading and writing didn't interest him as much as oral language

6422:March:50B:S2:R: well written, easy to read

6569:Nov:49B:M2:L: he used a lot of incomplete sentences or broken phrases; he didn't like to reread to see if what he wrote made sense (he was thinking ahead of his writing ability).

7. General Evaluative

Includes comments of a general evaluative nature as well as statements regarding growth and development in retelling ability; also refers to grade levels and categories.

Examples:

8671:Nov:80:E3:M: really good

6089:March:36A:An2:A: early grade I writing

6445:Overall:S2:S:lot of development and it's obvious.

Appendix D
Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Literature Responses

Categories of Teachers' Descriptions of Literature Responses

1. Kind/Type of Responses

Refers to responses to texts through illustrating, labelling, narrative writing, observations, objective/literary comments, retellings, and retelling-responses.

1.1 Pictures and/or Labels

Responses consist of an illustration and/or accompanying label with the label generally being a retelling of the title or character(s); includes accompanying descriptive comments regarding illustrations, e.g., "basic," "detailed," "mature" etc.
Examples:
612:Oct:I02:Jk:K: drew a picture of the scarecrow
4250:Nov:II9:He1:P: she just labelled
6707:Oct:I33:S2:L: Shane chose to illustrate and label the things the wind blew rather than write them in sentence form as a response to the book.

1.2 Pictures and Writing

Responses consist of an illustration and accompanying writing that goes beyond labelling to include narrative and dialogue; evaluative comments such as "nice," "mature," etc are used to describe illustrations.
Examples:
4238:Jan:I22:Ll:L: narrative and dialogue used here
604:Feb:108:Rk:A: is beginning to write narrative (begins with a problem); is using part of the narrative structure in which he recognizes there is a problem.

1.3 Observation and/or Comment

General statements regarding the presence of an observation and/or comment as well as descriptions of character(s) and their actions.
Examples:
730:Jan:I05:Dk:A: an observation expressed about Katie
599:Jan:I05:Rk:A: he has made some observations (3) about the snowplow and expresses these in writing.

1.4 Objective/Literary

Refers to responses that mention text characteristics, e.g., author, title, publisher, number of chapters and illustrations.
Examples:
7360:Dec:152:Li3:R: gave the title but not the author
7276:Feb:104:P3:A: gives author's name and notes that Jan Brett writes about hedgehogs
7408:Jan:I04:M3:R:commented on illustrations mostly.

1.5 Retelling

General, direct statements regarding the presence or absence of retellings as responses; refers more to recall than personal involvement. Retelling characteristics are described as interlude, background, summary, facts, incidents and details; amount of retelling is described as ranging from a brief description to retelling a lot of the book.

Examples:

7259:Dec:151&152:P3:R: read like retellings; focus on details

6913:Jan:136:T2:S: more follow-up; gave some background as introduction

6940:Jan:139:T2:A: gives a little talk about the book - a little summary.

1.6 Retelling-Response

Refers to responses that are a combination of retellings and responses with usually the retelling given first.

Examples:

7273A:Feb:158:P3:A: First time to express a personal reaction to a book, e.g., *I like that book because it's about* ... ; still recounting the story though - seems to like to retell stories (an inference I drew from reading her stories)

6760:Jan:139:S2:L: I guess you could say this is both response and retelling because he's done a little of both. It was only supposed to be a response.

2. Content

Refers to the presence or absence of specific text content in responses, e.g., summaries, generalizations, critical or main parts, gist, main ideas, events, problems-solutions, details and comprehension of content.

2.1. Summaries & Generalizations

Refers to direct statements regarding the presence and examples of summaries and generalizations as well as evaluative comments regarding summaries. Summaries are described as synopses, conclusions and blips which are concise giving the reader enough information to have a sense of what the book is about. Responses containing summaries are distinguished from responses consisting of details.

Examples:

613:Oct:102:Jk:K: gives a summary sentence

7269:Feb:157:P3:R: summarizes, e.g., does not list the animals, e.g., *Most of the animals*

7415:March:161:M3:R: very concise

6770:Jan:139:S2:M: makes generalizations, e.g., *all the relatives came*; and doesn't go into every bit of clothes but mentions significant part, e.g., jeans ...

2.2 Main Parts/Events

Includes general, direct statements regarding the presence or omission of main parts and events, the general or specific number of main parts and events as well as examples. Main Parts and events are described as the important, critical, essential or significant parts or events of texts that everything else revolves around and is a consequence of; are

contrasted with "filling in details" and includes kinds of main parts and events, e.g., endings, active parts, facts, incidents and plots.
Examples:
685:Jan:l09A:Sk:K: wrote about the main part of story
7067:Feb:l44:M2:L: he has pulled out some of the main parts, e.g., that children decided to help the man who was carrying the torch
42l4:Jan:l23:Al:A: he focuses on an active part of the story.

2.3 Main Ideas/Gists

Includes general statements regarding the presence and examples of main ideas or gists in written responses and illustrations; described as the "crunch" or main concepts of what the whole story is about; are contrasted with details.
Examples:
578:Jan:l05:Rk:J: got gist of story, e.g., *works hard*
7322:March:l61:An3:R: she understands the story; has main idea, e.g., it was her dog, she wanted to take the dog out one more time and they get lost
581:Feb:overall:Rk:K: not filling in details in his response to literature; mainly main idea.

2.4 Problems-Solutions

Refers to general statements regarding the presence or absence of problems-solutions in responses; includes examples of problems and/or solutions.
Examples:
6850:Sept:l27:T2:S: establishes problem
7048:Oct:l34:M2:A: seems like he's telling the main problem in the book (that she lost her broomstick).

2.5 Details

General statements regarding the presence or absence of details and examples of details in illustrations and writing; includes general and specific amount or number of details; is contrasted with summarizing; kinds of details include elaborations or descriptions of text parts or examples as well as the number, descriptions, actions and conversations of characters.
Examples:
678:Feb:l07:Sk:K: more detail to the drawings
7254:Nov:148:P3:R: recalls details from the story, e.g., types of whales
4315:Oct:ll5:Jel:J: he focuses on a description of the character
6848:Sept:l27:T2:S: included speech (conversation).

2.6 Comprehension

General statements regarding the presence or absence of comprehension as determined by the content recalled and whether the response makes sense and is on topic.

Examples:
7335:March:l61:An3:A: comprehends the story
7306:Feb::l53:An3:R: I know that she knows what this book is about.

3. Personal

Personal responses are described as including general and specific emotional or expressive feelings for texts; includes extensions of texts, references to personal experiences, reasons and favorite parts.

3.1 General: Emotional, Expressive Feelings

Refers to direct statements regarding the presence or absence of personal responses; includes comments, opinions, views, wonderings and feelings; are extraneous to texts rather than taken directly from texts.
Examples:
658:Jan:l05:Mk:K: gives an emotional response
7188A:Feb:l43:St2:R: responded with her own opinion - thought the book should be longer
7349:Nov:148:Li3:R: expressed feelings, e.g., liked this story because *it's about whales and I like whales.*
4296:Nov:103:Erl:J: */soap suds bursting on your nose/* is taken straight from book.

3.2 Personal Experiences

Described through direct statements and/or examples regarding utilization of personal experiences through identification with the story, relating the story to one's own feelings and experiences and to other stories.
Examples:
4301:March:ll8:Erl:A: was able to relate it to her own feelings
7372:Jan:155:Li3:A: personal response, e.g., *I liked...* ; however did not link for the reader how this girl cared for animals and he cares for animals (reader can infer this).

3.3 Reasons

Refers to direct statements regarding the presence or absence of reasons, the general and specific amount of reasons as well as examples; includes reasons for liking texts or for favorite parts, e.g., objective, literary and personal reasons; also refers to the quality of reasons.
Examples:
7177:Feb:l42:St2:S: gave a reason - *it's funny* and backed herself up by citing the funny rhyme
6960:Jan:141:T2:A: gives l reason (rhymes on every page)
6830:Feb:l44:S2:R: was interested in this book because he could relate his own personal experiences - skiing.

3.4 Favorite Parts

Described through general statements regarding the presence or absence of favorite parts as well as the amount, number and examples of favorite parts; kinds of favorite parts responded to include content and objective parts, e.g., characters, language, story structure locations and descriptions and actions of characters.
Examples:
4261:Jan:123:He1:P: identifies one specific part of the story -the beginning as her favorite part
7426:Feb:l67 E3:M: tells her favorite and funniest parts
6751:Jan:136:Sh2:M: doesn't tell why this is his favorite part.

4. Appearance

Refers to the nature of word, sentence and story structure of responses.

4.1 Word Structure

Includes general statements regarding the presence or absence of correct spelling, examples and analysis of misspellings; also refers to the nature of penmanship, cursive writing and vocabulary.
Examples:
706A:Jan:l09A:Sk:A: spells some words conventionally and uses beginning and ending consonants for others
7298:Nov:l48:An3:R: spelled "called - cald" and "girl - gril"
7295:March:l71:P3:A: *admire it* - rich vocabulary.

4.2 Sentence Structure

Refers to the presence or absence of complete meaningful sentences ranging from simple to complex sentences; includes general and specific comments as well as examples of punctuation and capitalization, connectors and spacing between words; also refers to difficulty with pronouns and omission of words.
Examples:
6703:Oct:l31:S2:M: he just gives a listing
587:Feb:Overall:Rk:K: still writing simple sentences
6812:Feb:l42:S2:R:used quotation marks appropriately
657:Feb:l07:Mk:K: is starting to space.

4.3 Story Structure

Refers to general comments regarding the presence or absence of concept of story and basic storyline through individual or combined components of story structure and sequence; also refers to the length of responses as ranging from l sentence to more than l sentence; includes evaluative comments regarding components of story structure.
Examples:
7260:Dec:151&152:P3:R: beginning, e.g., *It is about a puppy named Scottie*.
6824:Feb:l44:S2:A: uses good connectives, e.g., *then, so* appropriately

634:Feb:l08:Jk:K: uses correct sequence
699:June:lll:Sk:J: is writing more than one sentence.

5. Other

Other factors affecting the quality and length of responses include the nature of the response task, texts used, skills and personality.

5.1 Nature of Task

Refers to the difficulty of the response task and children's understanding of the task; includes teachers' approach(s), directions and expectations regarding responses, time given to complete responses and context, e.g., if response followed teacher reading of text or independent choosing and/or reading of text.

Examples:
6749:Jan:l36:S2:M: the profoundness of Wilfred for grade 2 and the nature of the task
6704:Oct:l31:S2:M: maybe he talks about characters because this was discussed
7258:Nov:l48:P3:R: she wrote about a book I read to the class entitled Waiting for Whales.

5.2 Nature of Texts

Refers to text language as well as children's interest in and familiarity with texts.

Examples:
6712:Oct:l33:S2:M: maybe that's the appeal of the book and he's zeroed in on all the different actions - what appealed to him
4290A:Oct:115:Erl:A: she's picked out the recurring language pattern and this pattern was also involved with the plot.

5.3 Skills & Personality

Skills include attention span, reading and writing ability, the relation between reading ability and quality of responses; personality factors include shyness and risk-taking.

Examples:
551:Nov:l03:Rk:K: other children who can't read as well make up better stories
4342:Nov:104:Cul:J: his limited written language limits what he can write or maybe our ability to read his writing has limited it!
6987:Overall:T2:L: she is a shy child ...is grabbing for something in the book rather than within her ... it's her make-up.

6. General Evaluative

Includes comments of a general evaluative nature regarding responses; includes examples and reasons for evaluative comments.

6.1 General Evaluative Comments

General evaluative comments regarding responses including accuracy, e.g., "good," "excellent," "immature;" may include examples and reasons for evaluative comments as well as reference to amount of thinking.

Examples:

4333:Sept:113:Cul:J: a good response - told what happened in that part of the story
6826:Feb:144:S2:R: showing real growth in thought.

6.2 Developmental

Refers to age and grade expectations.

Examples:

6726:Oct:134:S2:A:has told enough for a grade 2 early in the year
6739:Feb:133:S2:S: is at level 1, e.g., listing, or only states facts, e.g., what the wind did but no comment
6670:Sept:127:S2:M: writes a fair amount early in year - writes 1/2 page in first week of school and by February is writing full pages.

Appendix E
Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Running Records

Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Running Records

1. Graphic Similarity
Refers to the extent to which the child processes print cues, by determining visual similarity between text and reader's response. Miscues with high visual similarity (H) are those in which half or more of the letters in the text word are the same as those in the miscue. Partial visual similarity (P) describes miscues in which at least one but fewer than half of the letters in the text word are the same as those in the miscue. Miscues with no visual similarity (N) contain no letters which are the same as the text word. This also refers to omissions and insertions.

Examples:	Text Word	Reader's Response
High Graphic Similarity (H)	Then	When
	there	three
Partial Graphic Similarity (P)	Five	Four
	were	was
No Visual Similarity (N)		And
	any	the

2. Contextual Acceptability
Refers to miscues that are meaningful or contextually acceptable, reflecting use of syntactic and semantic cues. This reflects the extent to which the child uses language knowledge and world knowledge to predict words or construct a meaningful sentence or passage. The miscue makes sense to the reader but may or may not maintain the author's meaning. Miscues are considered to have high contextual acceptability (H) if they result in a meaningful sentence that is also meaningful in relation to prior sentences. Miscues have partial contextual acceptability (P1) if they result in a meaningful sentence but are not meaningful in relation to prior sentences. Miscues have partial contextual acceptability (P2) if they are meaningful only in relation to the part of the sentence before or after the miscue. Miscues that are not meaningful are considered to have no contextual acceptability (N), e.g., nonsense words.

Examples:	Text Word	Reader's Response
High Contextual Acceptability (H)	stayed	was
(Text 1)	Mommy	Momma
Partial Contextual Acceptability (P1)	went	want
(Text 1 & Text 2)	light	lot

Partial Contextual Acceptability (P2)	tried	told
(Text 1)	was	said
No Contextual Acceptability (N)	stared	startly
(Text 3)	sort	sot

3. Meaning Change
Refers to the extent to which the miscues change the author's meaning. Miscues coded as no meaning change do not result in any change in meaning and are synonymous with the word used by the author. Miscues coded as Partial meaning change involve a minimal change in meaning including changes in tense, plurality, possession or minor changes in meanings of verbs or minor concepts. Miscues coded as high meaning change involve an extensive change in the author's meaning.
(Handout: Analysis of Oral Reading Miscues (from Clinical Reading Course, University of Alberta)

Examples:	Text Word	Reader's Response
No Meaning Change (N)	of	from
(Text 4)	one	a
Partial Meaning Change (P)	cows	cow
(Text 2)	calling	call
High Meaning Change (H)	They	Then
(Text 2)	we	were

4. Other
i) No special consideration is given if the miscue is the first word of a sentence, e.g., may be N (Contextually) thus limiting the Contextual possibilities of the following miscues in that sentence).
ii) Told - unknown words which were told by the teacher were not analyzed for Graphic, Contextual or Meaning acceptability.

Examples:	Text Word	Reader's Response
Miscue is first word of sentence	Wake	Walk
(Text 1)		
Unknown word is told by teacher	stared	(told)
(Text 3)		

Text 1

Daddy's Day in Bed

was Momma
One Saturday Daddy stayed in bed. He had a bad cold. Mommy made
some hot lemonade. I took it upstairs to Daddy. He was asleep.
Walk
"Wake up, Daddy," I called. "Here's some hot lemonade for you."
want
I went downstairs to get my puppet. I took it upstairs to Daddy.
said
He was asleep.

Text 2

Through the Deep Snow: Barney's Story

One afternoon, Grandmother and I went to the barn. She milked the
cow call
cows. I fell asleep.... I heard Grandmother calling, "Barney!
told
Barney! Come here, Barney!" I tried to get through the snow, but
lot
I couldn't. The snow was too deep. Soon I saw a light. It was
Then
Terry, Jake and Grandmother. They were coming to get me. When
they got to the barn, I was happy to see them. Jake carried me
were
back to the farmhouse. Grandmother gave me my dinner. Then we all
sat down by the fire.

Text 3

A Whale of a Summer

(told) sot
They all stared gloomily out the window.... "This is sort of
creepy," he thought to himself as he listened to a foghorn moaning
in the distance.

Text 4

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

... One Sunday morning the warm sun came up and -- pop! -- out from of the egg came a tiny and very hungry caterpillar. He started to look for some food. On Monday he ate through a one apple. But he was still hungry.

Appendix F
Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Oral and Written Retellings
Clausal Units

Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Oral and Written Retellings
Clausal Units

1. Verbatim recall/Substituting and Paraphrasing

Meaning is not changed. Determiners, verbs or function words may be substituted. Nouns, verbs, attributes may be omitted. Claual units are paraphrased when the sentence contains specific referents for the concepts used in a text unit through:

Exampes: Verbatim Recall
Protocol: /as far as he could see./
Text: /as far as he could see./

Protocol: /And grandmother gave me my dinner./
Text: /Grandmother gave me my dinner./

Protocol: /She said,//"I left something here."/
Text: /"I left something here yesterday,"/ /she explained./

Examples: Substitution of Pronouns
Protocol: /Peter made snow angels./
Text: /and he made angels/

Protocol: only him and Sarah could hear it
Text: my sister and I had ever heard

Examples: Substitution of One Word for Another that has the Same Semantic and Grammatical Features
Protocol: /And he was telling his mom all the events./
Text: /He told his mother all about his adventures./

Protocol: /He looked out the door./
Text: /I ran to the barn door/ /and looked outside./

Protocol: /It was real./
Text: /It is alive./

Examples: Sequencing of Words, Substitution of Tenses
Protocol: /and [some] of the branches are broken/
Text: /and some broken branches/

Protocol: /I've always wanted to live in a nice, cool, dark cave./
Text: /I've always wanted to live in a dark, cool cave./

Protocol: /Lisa's mom said/
Text: /Lisa's mother was saying/

Examples: Paraphrasing of Text
Protocol: /He dried Corduroy's overalls./
Text: /He unbottoned Corduroy's shoulder straps/ /and put his overalls in the dryer./

Protocol: /He got tired and fell asleep./
Text: /But by now Corduroy felt drowsy,/ /and soon he nodded off to sleep./

Examples: Vague Statements in which one word is exact from the text but other text referents are not noted
Protocol: Terry carried Barney back to the farmhouse.
Text: /Soon I saw a light./ /It was Terry, Jake and Grandmother./

2. Combining
The protocol has specific referents in at least two clausal units. Information is grouped or combined across sentences. At least one of the key items or its synonym is used from each unit.
Examples:
Text: He accidentally tipped over the open-lidded box, and suddenly he was covered with soft, slippery soap flakes. Gradually Corduroy began to slip and slide ... "Oh what fun!" he said with a smile. "I've always wanted to ski down a steep mountainside."
Protocol: He slid down the suds and fell in the laundry basket.

Protocol: He found a stick.
Text: And he found something sticking out of the snow that made a new track. It was a stick.

Protocol: Grandmother went to milk the cows and Barney fell asleep.
Text: One afternoon, Grandmother and I went to the barn. She milked the cows. I fell asleep.

3. Generalizing
The protocol goes beyond the text through generalizing, summarizing and superordinate statements and classification.
Examples:
Protocol: He was looking at his own footprints.
Text: He walked with his toes pointing out like this: He walked with his toes pointing in, like that: Then he dragged his feet s-l-o-w-ly to make tracks.

Protocol: The wind started to blow and blew most of the things off people.

Text: The wind blew. It took the umbrella from Mr. White and quickly turned it inside out. It snatched the balloon from little Priscilla and swept it up to join the umbrella. And not content, it took a hat, and still not satisfied with that, it whipped a kite into the air and kept it spinning round up there. It grabbed a shirt left out to dry and tossed it upward to the sky.

Protocol: because he couldn't make a summer scene.
Text: But this time he could not do what the sultan wished. "I cannot paint branches that bend and sway in the breeze."

4. Inferring
The protocol is an extension of text information through the reteller using text and knowledge schema of world events, e.g., through filling in gaps in text information. The protocol does not provide a new structure for the text and is constrained by the text.
Examples:
Protocol: He opened the door and Lisa ran in.
Text: Next morning when the manager came to open the door of the laundromat, there was Lisa waiting.

Protocol: The snowball was melted.
Text: The snowball wasn't there.

Protocol: Once upon a time there was a little boy named Peter.
Text: One winter morning Peter woke up and looked out the window.

5. Elaborating
The protocol is not constrained by the text and does not contain text information. Although the protocol is triggered by the text, it is idiosyncratic to the reader's reconstruction of the text, e.g., storyline additions.
Examples:
Protocol: /At the beginning of the story well there was a tree./

Protocol: /Then they she came back another few days ago./

Protocol: And when she got there, his grandma said to "Give this kiss to Little Bear."
Text: "This kiss is for Little Bear," she said.

Protocol: He stamped his foot. Then he stamped two of his feet and the monkeys stamped two of their feet.
Text: He stamped his foot.

Protocol: Then the sultan left the tree there.
Text: Then he took the young serving-girl by the hand, and together they went out of the palace into the garden ...

6. Erroneous Recall
Erroneous text information includes errors in dates and names, substitutions, embedding, generalizations, inferencing, world information and knowledge.
Examples: Errors in Dates and Names
Protocol: I think it was a month.
Text: After a few months.

Protocol: Terry carried Barney back to the farmhouse.
Text: Jake carried me back to the farmhouse.

Protocol: His father planted that tree when he was born.
Text: Your grandfather planted that tree on the day your father was born.

Examples: Errors in Substitutions
Protocol: The chief steward went to his room.
Text: The chief steward sat beside the sultan's bed.

Protocol: he sadly waved from the window
Text: I sadly left the other children. I stood at my doorway and waved good-bye.

Examples: Errors in Embedding
Protocol: And it was and it was a vase screen.
Text: When he had finished, two servants placed the painted screen in front of the sultan's window. It was a vase of tree branches covered with pure white snow.

Examples: Errors in Generalizations
Protocol: Barney was lost in the barn.
Text: When I woke up it was dark. I ran to the barn door and looked outside.

Examples: Errors in World Information and Knowledge.
Protocol: Triceratops are meat eaters.
Text: They did not hurry, and often stopped to nibble at figs or tender tree saplings.

Story Structure

1. Beginning
Refers to recall of setting, characters and time.

2. Middle
Refers to recall of main events or episodes and happenings; theme, plot, concepts, characterization, organization and stylistics also considered

3. Ending
Refers to the resolution or conclusion.

A Pocket for Corduroy

__Late one summer afternoon Lisa and her mother took their laundry to the Laundromat.

__As always on such trips, Lisa carried along her toy bear, Corduroy. Beginning

__The Laundromat was a very busy place at this hour.

__"Now, Corduroy, you sit right her and wait for me," Lisa said. Middle

__"I'm going to help with our wash."

__Corduroy waited patiently. Then he suddenly perked up his ears. Event

__Lisa's mother was saying, "Be sure to take everything out of your pockets, Lisa dear. You don't want your precious things to get all wet and soapy."

__"Pockets?" said Corduroy to himself. "I don't have a pocket!"

__He slid off the chair. "I must find something to make a pocket out of," he said, and he began to look around.

__First he came to a pile of fancy towels and washcloths, but nothing was the right size or colour. Event

__Then he say a huge stack of colourful clothes in a laundry bag. "There ought to be something in there to make a pocket out of," he said. Event

__Without hesitating, he climbed inside the bag, which was filled with pieces of wet laundry. The dampness didn't bother Corduroy in the least. "This must be a cave," he said, sighing happily. "I've always wanted to live in a dark, cool cave."

__When the time came for Lisa to fetch her bear, he was gone. "Oh, Mommy!" she exclaimed. "Corduroy isn't here where I left him!" Event

__"I'm sorry, honey," said her mother, "but the Laundromat will be closing soon and we must be getting home." Lisa was reluctant to leave without Corduroy, but her mother insisted. "You can come back tomorrow," she said. "I'm sure he will still be here."

__As they left, a young man wearing an artist's beret was taking his wet laundry out of a bag - the very bag Corduroy had discovered! Event

__Before he knew it, Corduroy was being tossed, together with all the sheets, shirts, shorts, and slacks .... inside the dryer.

__But just as the artist was shutting the glass door, Corduroy tumbled out onto the floor.

__"How in thunder did that bear ever get mixed up with all my things?" the artist wondered.

__Poor Corduroy was damp all over.

__"The least I can do for him is give his overalls a good drying," said the man thoughtfully. He unbuttoned Corduroy's shoulder straps and put his overalls in the dryer.

__Corduroy grew dizzy as he watched the clothes spinning around, but the artist became inspired. "This would make a wonderful painting!" he said as he took a sketch pad out of his pocket and began drawing the swirling colours. "I can hardly wait to get back to my studio."

__Finally the dryer stopped whirling and the man gathered up the clothes. Then he helped Corduroy put on his warm, dry overalls.

__All at once the manager of the Laundromat called, "Closing time! Everybody out!" Corduroy was gently placed on top of the washing machine. Event

"I wonder who that bear belongs to," said the artist as he was leaving. "Seem to me he should have his name someplace. He's too fine a fellow to be lost."

__As soon as the lights were turned off, Corduroy began his search again. He was Event surprised to see something white glowing in the dark. "Maybe it's snow!" he said excitedly. "I've always wanted to play in the snow."

__He accidentally tipped over the oped-lidded box, and suddenly he was covered with soft, slippery soap flakes.

__Gradually Corduroy began to slip and slide ...

__"Oh what fun!" he said with a smile. "I've always wanted to ski down a steep mountainside."

__He landed paws first in an empty laundry basket.

__"This must be a cage," he said, peeking through the bars. "I've never wanted to live inside a cage like a bear in a zoo!" Event

__But by now Corduroy felt drowsy, and soon he nodded off to sleep. Event

__Next morning when the manager came to open the door of the Laundromat, there was Lisa waiting. Event

__"I left something here yesterday," she explained. "May I look around?"

__"Certainly," said the manager. "My customers are always leaving things."

__Lisa was searching under the chairs and in back of the washing machines when she heard the manager call her. "Is this what you're looking for, senorita?" Event

__"Yes, yes! He's my best friend!" shouted Lisa as she came running.

__She reached and picked Corduroy out of the basket. "So this is where you've been, you little rascal!" she said. "It's time I took you home!"

__Lisa thanked the manager and ran out the door and down the street, holding Corduroy tightly in the arms. "I thought I told you to wait for me," she said. "Why did you wander away?" Ending

__"I went looking for a pocket," Corduroy said.

__"Oh Corduroy! Why didn't you tell me you wanted a pocket? asked Lisa, giving him an affectionate squeeze.

__That very morning Lisa sewed a pocket on Corduroy's overalls.

__"And here is a card I've made with your name on it for you to keep tucked inside," she said.

__"I've always wanted a purple pocket with my name tucked inside," said Corduroy as he and Lisa nuzzled noses.

Appendix G
Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Literature Responses

Researcher's Definitions for Analysis of Literature Responses

1. Descriptive Statements

Refer to responses with a content or text focus; includes labeling and retelling text.

1.1 Labeling

Includes recall of characters and titles, sometimes with accompanying pictures; ranges from l word to l sentence but not as long as retellings.
Examples:
148:2:P3: It is called Waiting for Whales.
101:1:Sk: labels character, illustration or title recall *The Candy Witch*.

1.2 Retelling

Refers to "statement of fact[s]" from the text and may involve retelling part of the text through listing or recall of characters, descriptions of their appearance, their conversations and recall of 1 - 3 of their actions, setting (Odell & Cooper, 1976).
Examples:
111:1:Sk: The giant was very tall.
148: 2:M3: It was about a man who lived in a cottage.
116:1-2:J1: He always said, *I'm hot*. His wife said, *Put on another jacket*.
139:3-5:V2: They invited all of their relatives over for a barbecue.

2. Engagement/Involvement

Describes response statements of a personal nature, including feelings regarding texts, favorite characters, parts and descriptions; refers to character assessment and introspection, relating to own experiences and questioning, predicting, extending and hypothesizing.

2.1 Feelings Regarding Texts

Includes general emotional feelings towards texts sometimes with accompanying reasons for feelings.
Examples:
139:7:V2: That is a really, really good book.
120:1:Le1:It's funny.
131:4:Ch2: I was scared when she bumped into the funny things.

2.2 Favorite Characters

Responses include preferred characters sometimes with reasons for preference.
Examples:
124:5:Hl: I love the rainbow
140:2:Ch2: My favorite one is the koala.
125:1-2:Hl: I like the Pauline chicken because she laid lots of eggs.

2.3 Favorite Parts/Actions
Responses include retelling 1 - 2 favorite action(s) of character(s).
Examples:
118:1:Mk: I like the part where they carried Barney home.
222:4:Ll: I also like where all the animals got under the mushroom.
135:2,5:S2: My favorite part of The Little Fir Tree was when the children sang carols and I liked when the man went and got the tree for his kid.

2.4 Favorite Descriptions/Appearance
Responses refer to favorite descriptions of characters.
Examples:
143:3:Ch2: But I liked the part where he was in his underwear.
140:1:Ch2: I like the bird because its feathers float.

2.5 Character Assessment
Readers judge actions and values of characters against their own personal standards by putting themselves in the roles of characters; includes statements regarding liking or disliking characters as well as evaluative terms, e.g., *nice, smart*.
Examples:
150:6:Li3: She was weird.
105:1:Mk: Katy did a good job.
129:1:Ch2: I like Hansel and Gretel because they are nice.

2.6 Character Introspection
Refers to thoughts and feelings of characters that are not directly stated in the text; includes imagining what it would be like to be the character (Cox & Many, 1992).
Examples:
116:1:M: Farmer Joe was fed up with the heat.
111:1:SK: He tried to be silly by putting the high steeple on his head.
139:5:S2: But she didn't get the clothes she wanted which was jeans.
148:9:P3: The man was lonely.

2.7 Relates to own Experience
Involves connecting texts to own world by relating feelings and associations during reading and personal past experiences that generated similar feelings (Purves & Rippere, 1968; Cox & Many, 1992).
Examples:
144:3:S2: I liked it because I like skiing.
163:2:An3: And when I read it, it [my cat] is just like the cat in the book.
164:10:Li3: I like the book because I like dinosaurs.

2.8 Questioning & Predicting
Includes predicting character's actions and questioning unclear or incomplete content.

Examples:
135:2:Ch2: I thought that he would not walk.
133:3:Ch2: Then I do not know if they landed back in the haunted house.

2.9 Extending & Hypothesizing
The reader extends the story beyond the actual text and hypothesizes how the story could have been different (Cox & Many, 1992).
Examples:
128:V2: Writes own version of Jack and the Beanstalk patterned after The House that Jack Built.
129:Ch2: Wrote letter to Mr. Wolf telling him that *I do not like what you are doing to the 3 little pigs*.
130:S2: Wrote a letter to the giant from Jack telling him that he's sorry he stole things and will *give them back when you're 50*.

3. Explanations
Include descriptive and engagement reasons for liking texts.

3.1 Descriptive Statements
Refer to text content reasons for liking texts including characters and their actions.
Examples:
121:2:H1: because mom gave cookies to the children
158:6:P3: I really like this book because they turn out to be good friends.

3.2 Engagement/Involvement
Includes general engagement explanations for liking texts as well as more specific reasons related to personal interests.
Examples:
136:5:Ch2: I like the book because it is funny - the whole book.
148:2:Li3: I like the book because the story is about orcas and I like orcas.

4. Literary Evaluation
Responses include evaluation and recognition of all or parts of the text including text illustrations and language.

4.1 Illustrations
Includes general evaluative statements regarding text illustrations.
Examples:
142:4:S2: I liked it because of the illustrations.
148:4-5:P3: I liked the pictures [they] are the best.

4.2 Literary Comments Regarding Illustrator
Refers to recognition of illustrators' techniques.

Examples:
104:5:M3: All the books he illustrated had white people as characters.
104:4:M3: Ezra used paper and fabric for his pictures.

4.3 Language

Includes recognition of literary techniques and/or evaluation of author's language and style including rhyme.

Examples:
139:S2: I liked the book because it rhymes.
139:6:V2: I like that story because it is like The House That Jack Built ... the stanzas keep on building up.

5. Digressions

Include thoughts that are "outside the context of the text," e.g., reflections on the reading process (Hancock, 1993; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989).

Examples:
152:8-9:An3: I said Miss I liked it when you read things like books.
163:3:An3: Mom said that I am getting good at reading.
131:5:Ch2: I love to read books.